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I. *Aim:* The aim of this quarterly shall be to provide a forum (1) for the discussion of Christian faith and life on the basis of the Lutheran confession, (2) for the application of the principles of the Lutheran Church to the changing problems of religion and society, (3) for the fostering of world Lutheranism, and (4) for the promotion of understanding between Lutherans and other Christians.

II. *Policy:* The editors will welcome contributions that are likely to be helpful in the furtherance of the aims set forth above. It will be required of such contributions that they be frank and fair in their discussion of moot questions; that they be free from controversial animus; and that their contents be of real scholarly and practical value to the readers. Difference of opinion between contributors, or between a contributor and the editors, does not of itself exclude articles from publication since the editors do not hold themselves responsible for the opinions of contributors.

THE LUTHERAN QUARTERLY

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Preaching to a Secularized Society

By Axel C. Kildegaard

WHETHER or not Lutheran preaching speaks to the secular man and the secular society of our day is a question that is at once exasperating and intriguing. I have not made a survey of Lutheran pulpits, and if there were such a survey, I do not know what could be done with it in the matter of criteria or conclusions. How does one measure the Word of God? How does one dissect the contemporaneous, living organism to determine whether or not its life is vital or malignant? If dissection reveals death, then it is perhaps itself the primary fatal cause. What criterion would we use in our inquiry? The popularity or success of a preacher? But life has many imitations, and it is amazing how many have often lived in dreams while truth languished. Is the yardstick that we are to use that of doctrine? But doctrine is the servant, not the master, of the holy community; it is the derivative of the Word, not the determinant. Is the measure to be the results, in congregations, in terms of Christian confession and life? I suppose the answer must be "yes," but that simply begs the question again—and we would be even less happy about the legalistic relativisms that would be needed to measure this matter of Christian living.

In short, the positivism that science assumes in its inquiries and conclusions is irrelevant when something beyond the scope of naturalism is under question. One of the premises of Lutheranism, as I understand it, is that true preaching is a means of grace. In that case, modern sociology is automatically discounted. That would pertain to an exhaustive survey and analysis, and in like manner to any personal opinions, which are usually simply an unsystematic application on the basis of a more limited sampling of the same positivistic methods, and for that reason even less relevant.

This may all sound like a professional way of dodging the question, and in effect saying, "I don't know." In that case the remark at the outset, that the question is intriguing as well as exasperating, would be on a par with the innocuous comment of a teacher that a student's dull and vapid paper is "interesting." But the word "intriguing" applies

here on condition that the topic at least begins with the qquestion: "What are the marks of the Lutheran concept of preaching by which it can speak to modern man?"

In a famous monograph[1] on preaching written some years ago, Harry Emerson Fosdick insisted that for a sermon to be justified at all, something has to happen. Fosdick continues with a wonderful treatment of valuable insights and techniques, but somehow, in my opinion, he does not arrive at any real definition of what preaching is. He remarks that a sermon on the topic of joy should not simply be a discourse seeking to understand the phenomenon, but should produce joy. A consideration of repentance should lead auditors into the actual experience of repentance, etc. But we are never actually told how this is to be accomplished. Is it the minister with his insights, fluency, imagination, sympathy, knowledge of psychological techniques, and other valuable talents who finally accomplishes this "something"—this live contact which is true preaching?

Toward the end of his essay Fosdick observes that all preaching is creative. That is a powerful conclusion—if he had concluded there. However, in the next paragraph he remarks that "the true preacher is creative." Lutherans have often included preaching among the means of grace—but this comment identifies the wide gulf between Fosdick and this concept of the Word. "Means of grace"—but whose grace? He suggests that perhaps the creative quality is somewhat lacking in contemporary sermonizing because, although we may know a great deal more psychology than our fathers, we use a great deal less. A minister, then, can be creative because, or when, he knows how to manipulate the emotions and thinking of the man in the pew. Secularized man, with whom we are concerned, is thus to be trapped, drawn, and quartered.

This, of course, violates the entire Lutheran concept of worship. In fact, here is perhaps the sharpest and most obvious functional contrast between the Lutheran and other churches of Protestantism. Our services are not commemorative gatherings at which we conjure up our noblest ideals and most reverent moods. Ideals and moods may be derivative, but they are not definitive. The basic fact of our worship is that God is our host. We approach his presence with confession of

1 Harry Emerson Fosdick, "What is the Matter with Preaching?" in *Harpers Magazine*, July, 1928, and reprinted in pamphlet form.

sin and need, with praise and with prayer. As we receive from him, we respond with confession of faith, and the boldness of our prayers grows. As our host, through his grace, he bestows his gifts upon us: forgiveness, benediction, nourishment for life. The sermon is a part of this elementary concept—that God the Father is our host. Then, in answer to Fosdick, it is not the preacher who is creative, no matter how clever he is at manipulation, any more than it is the liturgist who personally blesses the congregation in the benediction, no matter how imposing and dignified his bearing or how resonant and awe-inspiring his voice.

But Fosdick is basically right when he says that something has to happen before we can call the discourse of the minister a sermon. That "something" can be simply put: the sermon becomes a prophetic proclamation to the very heart of the lives of the auditors. The sermon becomes the Word of God in this place, to this people, at this moment. Preaching is that witness which presents in true communication the convergence of the geographical, the historical, and the eternal event. Where time, place, and Gospel meet a creative word is operative. This, of course, takes the sermon out of the realm of discourses and lectures and tirades and catechetics and moralisms.

Preaching is not a display of erudition, nor is it forensics. It is neither the exposition of doctrine nor the presentation of individualistic opinion which we sometimes honor with the name of witness. Preaching by definition speaks to that man whom it confronts, in his language, in his time, and in the circumstances that define his life. The Word of God by definition is a creative and life-giving word. If the word of the pulpit is today on occasion static and sterile, this is nothing less than a presumptuous betrayal on the part of the preacher. His own words and technology have arrogantly usurped the place of the Most High. In short, the Lutheran Church has, in my opinion, the most vital and valid understanding of preaching. But often we have substituted the blueprint for the house, the nutritional description for the food, the BTU analysis for the fuel. Blueprints afford little security, and an understanding of vitamins supplies little nourishment, nor does discriminating knowledge of coal give warmth. The Word of God needs no apologetic on the part of man, but perhaps the subtlest of the sins of the pulpit is to substitute the apologetic for that which it would defend.

The question at issue is whether or not our preaching makes a vital impact upon secular man and his society. If it does not, then the cause may lie, in terms of our approach, in the failure of the preacher to grapple with the geographical, historical, or eternal event. These are not separable, as if one might say that Preacher A has achieved a relative success because he presents the Gospel while Preacher B also has a relative effectiveness because he has a true appreciation of the time in which he lives. The Gospel is the Gospel only in the fullness of time. It is the manna that nourishes this day but tomorrow is putrid. It is the good news simply because, and only insofar as, it is addressed, in the language which he can understand, to man as he *is*. If understanding of the faith which one generation has been granted is substituted for the incisive and necessary Word of God for this generation, it becomes the word of man. This does not mean to belittle that historical understanding which we as Lutherans particularly cherish. It is essential in every generation to come to grips intellectually with the truths revealed to man in Christ, and to do this most effectively it would be utter foolishness not to profit from those insights which history brings us from our own past. But here the basic insight of our tradition—that we live by faith, by the fact of God's revelatory act in Christ, and not by works (including the most valuable of our doctrinal tomes)—also must be applied.

The Word of God always makes use of human forms as a means. These include the communal insights and formulations of doctrine as well as the subjective commitment of the preacher. There is a sense in which preaching is accomplished only through testimony. But the testimony is only the means. If it becomes the end or goal, we soon find ourselves involved in an Oxford Group type of inwardliness which is simply a spiritual strip tease. The entire question of how the objective, living Gospel is related to the subjective witness of personal experience is similar to the question of doctrine and preaching. It is a problem very similar to the question of the church. Where does the reality of the church as the bride of Christ and as the militant and infallible Kingdom of God leave off, and where does the church as a human organization of fallible, sinful men begin? The latter is the only carrier of the former that this world will ever know, and yet the two must be carefully distinguished. Even so, the Word of God comes through the human word, and yet a distinction must also be made between them.

In his preaching task the minister embodies that tension which is characteristic of the church itself. The grace of God, as we know it, comes to us through those forms which are in and of themselves material —the water of Holy Baptism, the bread and wine of Holy Communion, and the spoken word of the minister. The grace of God is always the same insofar as it accomplishes the same purpose—the restoration of man. It comes to us in various forms, but it is no less his grace when he uses our words in the pulpit than when he uses that wine and those wafers that our hands have brought to his table. Thus the question that confronts each pastor as he prepares himself for preaching is not, "What shall I say on this text on Sunday?" It is rather, "What wouldst Thou, God, say unto me through thy Word that I might communicate it in thy service without either blunting its sharp edge or turning it into a clever sophistry?"

In the opening verses of the book of Jeremiah, the prophet tells of his call and ordination by the Lord. To the charge given him Jeremiah had replied, "Ah, God! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth." But he received this answer, "Do not say, 'I am only a youth,' for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak." And the Lord put forth his hand and touched his mouth, and said, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth." Paul's apostolic consciousness is a New Testament expression of this same constraint and yet awareness of high calling as he says, "Not I, but Christ in me."

This is the point at which Lutheran liturgical and homiletical points of view converge. As God is our host at our worship, the whole aspect of God's love and forgiveness, as this is covered in the lessons of the church year, becomes relevant. This may be one of the tests that we might apply to our preaching today. Does the minister seek in the text for a particular Sunday what God has to say to his church in this hour? Or does the minister use the service as an opportunity to present a discourse that he *believes* will edify and inspire? This is a subtle distinction, but it is one that points to perhaps our most frequent deviation, and at the same time to the loss of that immediate relevance which is our concern. The Swedish bishop, Einar Billing, reflects the more exacting and rewarding approach in his observation, "It is my experience that as a rule one preaches best concerning those subjects which one most needs but is least qualified to consider."

The Christian congregation feeds upon God's Word. But the man whose life is not in the context of the Christian congregation is also reached and overcome by the Word of God. The question, how this creative Word is related to the Scriptures, is beyond our present discussion, but there is one suggestion in the Gospel for Pentecost, John 14:25: "The counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you." The New Testament is not secular history—it presents the events of the historical life of Jesus as remembered and interpreted for us through the perspective of Pentecost. In this manner it is the resurrected Christ, active in our midst; it is the worshiping community which has its birth at Pentecost which gives validity to and seeks out the experience of the incarnate Jesus of Nazareth. We have the incarnate Christ nowhere except through those who lived and worked under the compulsion of the resurrected Christ. The creative Word of God which is operative in preaching is the authority for that Word of God which we find in Scripture. But it is the very nature of the Word that is preached to root itself in history—to seek to understand and to remember. So, also, true preaching will seek out the historical and incarnate Christ, even as the memory of the church values all treasures given by the Lord as necessary to life. The Pentecost church preached a Gospel, rooted in historical objectivity, in the tongues of many nations. The Word came with power, as it came specifically to men in their own native language. It came with power because it remembered and built upon its remembrance of the incarnate Lord.

Insofar as the preaching of the Lutheran Church speaks in the thought forms and language of man today, it is effectively meeting the secular challenge. But what are the indications that Lutherans are equipped to do so? Some denominations have only recently awakened to the fact that in the eyes of secular man the church is often to be equated with middle class morality in social, political, and economic issues. The old bromide, with which Communism has so often dismissed the claims of the church, that religion is the opiate of the masses, has too often been true. The most obvious example is perhaps to be noted in the working man's struggle in the southern states, where so often the church has been aligned with the status quo; to be interested in the cause of labor is to contend with the church constituency as well as with management. In such a situation it is, of course, obvious that the church

cannot bring its incisive word to bear on a particular economic area of the population, for the church has become partisan by default and does not speak the language of the laboring man.

The Lutheran Church escaped the ravages of the Social Gospel, and we have been fortunate that very little of our preaching has consisted of enlightened discourses on social, economic, and political issues. Though the bankruptcy of the Social Gospel is now generally conceded, it remains true that while the churches so infected may have lost sight of the *kerygma,* they had a passion for pertinency. Much of our church, I am afraid, has rejoiced in the collapse of liberalism without seeing the historic needs which it, albeit abortively, sought to answer. There is here no "either-or" of orthodoxy or Social Gospel. There is simply a need for preaching that represents a convergence of the geographical, historical, and eternal event. The Gospel becomes the living Gospel where it touches human life, and since man is a social, an economic, and a political being, it must touch him there.

The Lutheran Church has not evidenced an abiding concern in social ethics. Our traditional views on the two realms of church and state, as well as our basic horror of any doctrine of works, have inclined us to read only a spiritual meaning into the injunction to be the "salt of the earth." In our reluctance to concern ourselves with the whole field of social ethics because of our doctrinal pre-conditioning, we have been far too prone to close our eyes to social injustice. While it is true that all men have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and are thus totally dependent upon faith through Christ for their salvation, it is also true that man is an ethical being, and if he has no studied and purposeful ethics, he will gravitate to an unstudied and hit-or-miss ethic. While the Gospel must always be alive and contemporary, this is equally true of the Law which the Gospel fulfills. A church which is concerned with the living Gospel must by that very premise concern itself with an ethic that is also alive and contemporary. Because of default in this area, the Lutheran Church has in my opinion too often become a sounding board of conservative, middle-class morality, anti-labor, anti-socialized medicine, etc.

A "good" Lutheran supports the N.A.M., the A.M.A., the private utilities, the fair tax association, and the straight Republican ticket. I do not wish to imply that social justice lies with the opposite of each of these interest groups. But it is a tragic condition when we are

identified with *any* particular interest groups. If this accusation, which is by no means original here, is true, then our preaching cannot make any inroads upon secularism. We do not speak the language of the working man, even as we do not know the issues as these appear to him.

It is my basic thesis that preaching is that witness which presents in true communication the convergence of the geographical, the historical, and the eternal event. It is a means of grace which might be called God's living Word of the moment. The strength of the Lutheran pulpit in the context of this definition lies in its reverence for the Scriptures as the Holy Spirit continues to counsel and bring to our remembrance the incarnate Lord. Our further strength is to be found in our concept of worship, wherein we as a chosen people wait upon the Lord and his Word. However, a shadow of doubt is cast over the effectiveness of the Lutheran pulpit when we substitute doctrine and catechetics for preaching the Gospel and because we neglect to seek to understand the world in which we live. We are in no danger now of succumbing to the dying Social Gospel, but we need to learn from it what once gave it a semblance of life—its passion for relevance.

Preaching as the Word Made Relevant

By Edmund A. Steimle

I AM not unaware of the almost painful tautology as well as the implicit blasphemy in the title. To speak of the Word of God—the revelation of God in Christ, the very bestowal by God of himself to man—as being "relevant" to man is almost in a class with saying that God may be "useful" to man. And to suggest further that the preacher can "make" the Word relevant as if he could give God an "assist" in this matter of making himself known to man, is little short of blasphemy. And yet the major problem for preaching today is a matter of relevance. And if the preacher cannot be said to help "make" the Word relevant, at least he ought to avoid the unforgivable sin of making it irrelevant—and there is no question about the possibilities in that direction!

The problem of relevance is, of course, not a new one in our time. I believe it was Reinhold Niebuhr who a number of years ago said in effect that the major problem of our times is no longer whether Christianity is credible or not, but that it merely seems irrelevant. And this judgment has been confirmed in my own experience at Cambridge where, during a dozen years of ministering to students, a steady procession of them coming from every part of the country would testify to the dreary fact that for the most part—there were shining exceptions, of course—the preaching in their home churches left a great deal to be desired. I might add that their judgments were couched in somewhat stronger language. But when their generalizations had been sifted down and a considerable dash of salt had been added, the one word that best described it was irrelevant. It was biblical and doctrinal for the most part, but it was meaningless—at least in terms of the experience of this younger generation. The Gospel was preached, but in irrelevant terms which is tantamount to saying that the Gospel was not preached. And then add to these who did attend church a whole host of other students who never came near the churches or the college chapels simply because it was assumed that whatever was said or done there was not worth bothering about, not because what was said or done there was incredible, primarily—that might have piqued their curiosity!—but simply because

it was assumed that it would be irrelevant. And the question raises itself, Why this assumption of irrelevance if there was not some experience in the background somewhere to give credence to it?

Although this problem of relevance in relation to preaching has been borne in upon me in my relation to students, it is not limited to the university situation. It is a general problem and, as I have suggested, not a new one. At least two series of lectures on preaching have wrestled with the problem: one given almost fifty years ago at Yale by P. T. Forsyth, in which he treats of it in connection with a broader theme, *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind* (New York, 1907); and the other given about ten years ago in the Warrack series by H. H. Farmer, *The Servant of the Word* (New York, 1942), in which he addresses himself to the subject more specifically. And I would acknowledge my own indebtedness to both of these fine studies here.

But I am more concerned with the problem as it relates to the Lutheran pulpit, for there are areas in which Lutheran preaching has laid itself open to the charge of irrelevance, quite aside from the obvious irrelevance of that preaching which is little more than moralizing, all tinsel and froth, which may also be found in Lutheran preaching but which on the whole is not characteristic of it.

In the first place, Lutheran preaching, and I am thinking especially in terms of the past twenty-five years in America, has been guilty of the irrelevance of a wooden and mechanical presentation of doctrine. I understand that seminaries are frequently requested to place more emphasis upon doctrinal preaching, which may be all to the good—depending. There are sermons which are doctrinal to the bone, couched in language drawn almost exclusively from the Confessions and the Bible with scarcely an illustration in these monolithic structures to give the poor listener in the pew an inkling as to what riches may be hidden therein, and given out in sonorous tones as if the vocal chords could somehow make intelligible what the mind apparently could not. We have for the most part outgrown mechanical theories of inspiration of Scripture, but it is still to be shown that we have outgrown an equally mechanical presentation of doctrine, as if simply by pronouncing the words, "justification by faith," for example, we had somehow fed the souls of the congregation.

Doctrinal sermons are needed, if by that we mean sermons which convey to the listener the great truths of our faith which first have

come alive in the experience of the preacher and then are communicated in such wise that they come alive in the experience of the listener. But anything short of this kind of doctrinal preaching is little more than a mouthing of shibboleths or a speaking with tongues, which may indeed be evidence of the presence of the Spirit in the preacher but, as Paul has it, "he speaketh not unto men but unto God; for no man understandeth him."

Coupled with this mechanical presentation of doctrine in Lutheran pulpits, and tributary to it, is a wooden and lifeless view of the authority of the pulpit. There is no question that our authority as preachers derives from the authority of the Word of God which we are commissioned to preach. And our people recognize this to an amazing degree. In no other church, with perhaps the possible exception of the Church of Scotland, is the pulpit accorded such respect by the people because of the authority of the Word. But that is no reason why Lutheran preachers should take such shameless advantage of it as they often do. Confusing the source of their authority with a mechanical view of inspiration or with a mechanical presentation of doctrine, and encouraged by a docile and respectful people, all too many Lutheran preachers have felt that all that is necessary is to "proclaim" the Gospel in biblical or theological language, regardless of whether it is intelligible to the people or not, for is not their authority this very Word of God which they have now "proclaimed?" The question, of course, is whether in any such fashion they have actually "proclaimed" the Gospel at all. If the Word of God thus proclaimed is irrelevant to the people in the pew, not because the people are not willing and eager to listen, but because of the dereliction or sheer laziness of the preacher to "make the Word relevant," wherein then lies his authority?

A second area in which the Lutheran pulpit has frequently opened itself to the charge of irrelevance is in its emphasis upon Christo-centric preaching to the neglect of theo-centric preaching. Which is to say that a perfectly proper and necessary emphasis upon Christ has been so heightened as to result in an improper de-emphasis upon God. The net result is preaching which is irrelevant with respect to the Gospel. For the Gospel after all is good news, not about Christ, but about God.

In its zeal to affirm God's redemptive activity in Christ, the Lutheran pulpit has moved all unconsciously in the direction of a Christomonism so far as its total effect upon the man in the pew is concerned.

This man is constantly besought to trust Christ, believe in Christ, accept Christ. Implicit in the appeal, from the preacher's point of view, is the thought of the *God* we know, accept, and trust in Christ. But the implication is not explicitly set forth in such a way that the man in the pew connects what the preacher is saying about Christ with that group of associations which in his own mind are gathered about the word "God." The result is that even well-informed laymen may be discovered to be living in a world with two deities: the Lord Jesus Christ who redeems and saves, whom the man loves and trusts, and the God of nature and of death whom the man respects and fears.

Prominent in the background of this strange irrelevance, which may be more prevalent than we suspect, lies, I believe, the Christocentric emphasis in Lutheran preaching which has been twisted so out of proportion, even though unintentionally, that for the people in the pew the essential Gospel, the revelation and redemptive act of *God* in Christ, has been all but lost. To "accept Christ as my personal Saviour" apparently has little or nothing to do with God. And such preaching is simply irrelevant to the Word of God which is given into our hands to preach.

And then a third area in which the charge of irrelevance may properly be brought against the Lutheran pulpit is its emphasis upon personal salvation to the neglect of the social context in which that person stands. Lest there be misunderstanding it should be stated emphatically that the emphasis upon personal salvation—to bring the individual to repentance and faith—is the primary object of Christian preaching, so long as it takes due recognition of the equally primary fact that no individual can be cut off from his relationships to other individuals and thus from the whole social fabric of which he is a part. And it is this "due recognition" which is so frequently lacking in Lutheran pulpits.

The reasons for this exclusive emphasis upon what, for want of a better phrase, I have called "personal salvation" are not difficult to trace. For one thing, there is an eternal and unchangeable message to be preached to every man regardless of the times in which he happens to be living. The Gospel is the same Gospel whether it be preached in the first or in the twentieth century. And then, too, there are certain unchanging circumstances in which every man finds himself, also regardless of the age in which he happens to be living: death and bereavement,

suffering and loneliness, sin and guilt, are to be dealt with in the life of every man whether he happens to live under the Caesars or under Truman and Eisenhower. Moreover, a man's personal relationships to the neighbor in his family or across the street are not markedly different whether he lives in sixteenth century Germany or in twentieth century Chicago. A message therefore which confines itself to the unchanging elements in the life of the individual is presumed to be not only safe but adequate.

Moreover, how can a preacher involve himself in preaching to the individual in terms of the social fabric of which he is a part without resorting to the excesses of the "social gospel" in which programs, policies, and pronouncements quickly leave the Gospel behind and take the place of the living Word of God to man? And Lutheran pulpits have, for the most part, avoided the irrelevance of the social gospel to which many other pulpits fell prey, but only at the cost of this other irrelevance: a personal gospel which shut its eyes to the admittedly complex and involved political, economic, and social factors in which every individual in twentieth century America is inevitably enmeshed.

Such preaching is open to the charge of irrelevance because, in the first place, it presents the Gospel in such a way as to suggest that it is an escape from the harsh and bitter realities of our time; presenting it in almost as blasphemous terms, even though implicit and not explicit, as the current vogue of escapist preaching which hawks the wares of the Gospel for the good it will do your headaches, insomnia, and neuroses. Preaching which fails to take due recognition of the social fabric in which the individual stands, with all of its complex problems, and preaches a "personal salvation" as if the Gospel had no relation to the individual except in his immediate personal life, is also escapist preaching and is irrelevant both to the Gospel and to the individual.

And in the second place, by its silence on the social concerns of our time, preaching merely confirms from the pulpit the tragic compartmentalization of modern life: family life is here in the second drawer; my business life is in the top drawer, center; international problems lie on the surface of the newspaper on top of the desk; and my religious life is tucked away in the bottom drawer, left—to be opened, if it is not stuck, on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings in Lent. Preaching which is not "existential," which does not take into account the whole man in the totality of his relationships, is irrelevant both to the Gospel and to the individual to whom the Gospel is preached.

Now these are, it seems to me, the chief areas in which Lutheran preaching is open to the charge of irrelevance: a mechanical presentation of doctrine, and tributary to it a mechanical and wooden view of the authority of the preacher; an emphasis upon Christo-centricity to the neglect of theo-centricity; and an emphasis upon personal salvation to the neglect of the social context in which the individual exists. Granting the usual exceptions to such broad generalizations, I believe the charges must be taken seriously.

It will have been noticed, no doubt, that in each case the charge of irrelevance hinges upon a distortion of a perfectly valid and indispensable emphasis in preaching. Indeed, these are precisely the emphases which have been the strong points of Lutheran preaching: doctrinal, Christo-centric, and evangelical. But the distortion of these valid and indispensable emphases is not surprising since the devil always attacks at the point where we presume ourselves to be the strongest; and where we think we are strongest, there we may very well prove to be the weakest.

Now let us turn to the answer. How is preaching to be viewed as the "Word made relevant" in our time?

To begin with there must, of course, be recognition of the nature of the Gospel itself, for the preaching of the Gospel cannot be divorced from the content of the Gospel. The message and its content are one and the same. The content of the Gospel determines its form—the preaching of it. Thus when we say that the Gospel (or the Word of God—the two terms are virtually interchangeable in our use of them here) is the disclosure by God of himself to man in an event in history, we are in effect saying that the preaching of the Word is also the disclosure by God of himself to man in an event in history. The Gospel is not merely what God has to "say about himself." Revelation is not merely a saying of words.

> Revelation does not consist of communications about God. It never did. If it had it might have come by an inspired book dictated to one in a dream. But revelation is the self-bestowal of the living God, his self-limitation in the interest of grace. It is the living God in the act of imparting himself to living souls. It is God himself drawing ever more near and arrived at last. And a living God can only come to men by living men. . . . It was by men that God gave himself to men, till, in the fullness of time, he came, for good and all, in the God-man Christ, the living Word; in whom God was present, reconciling the world unto himself, not

merely acting through him but present in him, reconciling and not speaking of reconciliation, or merely offering it to us.[1]

The content of the Gospel is an event: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us," lived, suffered, died, rose again; a once and for all event, a deed, an act of God. This nature of the Gospel as an event is clear, and recognition of it will save preaching from the irrelevance of a Christo-centricity which neglects God. *God* was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. I wish we Lutherans would underline that first word in this key text, and, for a time at least, put the accent on God every time we read it aloud.

A frequent criticism of sermons which are presumed to fall short of preaching the Gospel is to charge that the word "Christ" was not mentioned. Without completely endorsing the principle that the word must be mentioned before a sermon can be evangelical, I should nevertheless like to play along with it for a moment and ask whether a sermon which presumes to preach the Gospel may be called evangelical, even if Christ be mentioned in every other sentence, if the word "God" does not appear? The Gospel, to repeat, is not good news about Christ, it is the good news about God. And the fact is that for many of our people the word "God" carries a number of associations: power, prayer, nature, death; and the word "Christ" also carries a number of associations: cross, shepherd, love, miracle; but all too often the two groups of associations are almost complete strangers to each other, which simply underlines the necessity for preaching to be explicit in witnessing to an event which is an act of *God*. For this is the Gospel: the good news about God.

But the divine event, though once for all, is also "prolonged" (to use Forsyth's word) in the witness to it. Our preaching, inasmuch as it is biblical, is significantly rooted not in the event itself but in the witness to the event as that witness is preserved to us in the Scriptures. For the New Testament is nothing more nor less than the witness to the event. It is itself the preaching of the event. Paul preached, and we have the record of it in the Epistles. The early church preached, and we have the record of it in the Gospels. And yet we have in the New Testament more than simply an account or even a primary witness to what happened once. We do not tell people to read the New Testament because they will

1 P. T. Forsyth, *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, p. 16.

find there a record of what happened once to some people some 2,000 years ago; we tell them to read it because there, in the witness to the event, the event itself is prolonged. There is to be found the living Word of God, not in any pedestrian or mechanical sense, but in the very disclosure by God of himself. The Bible is a witness to an event, an expression of faith; but it is also, in that witness, the source of faith. And so we say that the Bible is the Word of God, by which we mean to say that there, in the witness to the event, the event is prolonged, God continually disclosing himself to man.

Which raises an old question and brings us to the necessity of preaching today. The question is this: If by some atomic mass murder every living Christian were wiped out and all that was left to bear witness to the event were a few copies of the Bible, with no one even to say, "Go read, for this I know to be true because it happened to me," could the Christian enterprise be reborn? I would venture to say no. This is not to say that God *could* not do so, but on the basis of what we know of him God has chosen to reveal himself not in a Book, but in a Person. And he continues to reveal himself not in a Book, primarily, but in persons. As H. H. Farmer puts it,

> The necessity of preaching resides in the fact that when God saves a man through Christ, he insists on a living, personal encounter with him here and now in the sphere of present personal relationships. Preaching is that divine, saving activity in history which began 2,000 years ago in the advent of Christ and in his personal relationships with men and women, and has continued throughout the ages in the sphere of redeemed personal relationships (which is the true church), now focusing on me, confronting me, as a person indissolubly bound up with other persons at this present time. This focusing on me is not apart from what has gone before, nor can it be, for it is part of the continuous purpose throghout the years which began in Christ; hence preaching is telling me something. But it is not merely *telling* me something. It is God actively probing me, challenging my will, calling on me for decision, offering me his succour, through the only medium which the nature of his purpose permits him to use, the medium of a personal relationship. It is as though, to adapt the Apostle's words, "God did beseech me by you." It is God's "I-Thou" relationship with me carried on your "I-Thou" relationship with me, both together coming out of the heart of his saving purpose which is moving on through history to its consummation in his Kingdom.[2]

If preaching is to be saved from irrelevance today, there should be

2 H. H. Farmer, *The Servant of the Word*, pp. 27-28.

some awareness not only of the content of the Gospel, but also of the relation of the Bible to that Gospel and the relation of preaching to both. Preaching must be biblical, not as the witness to a witness, which is what happens in an arid biblicism, but rather as the witness to an event today to which the Bible bears witness; a witness today which is forever corrected and tested by the biblical witness, but which is also a witness to an event that is happening now at this moment. The divine event is prolonged in the preaching of the Bible and in the preaching of today. Preaching is therefore more than something said; it is something done! God is disclosing himself again to man with his demand and his promise.

But how does a sermon become more than something merely said, become an actual prolongation of the self-disclosure of God to man in Christ? How does it become something more than words and become the Word which is itself a deed? Here is where, as Forsyth points out, "The Catholic form of worship will always have an advantage over ours so long as people come away from its central act with the sense of something done in the spirit-world, while they leave ours with the sense only of something said to this present world."[3] This is our basic problem in preaching—how a matter of multiplying words can in any sense become more than mere words.

In facing that problem we must begin with the person of the preacher. It does not go without saying that he must be a man of God, for the phrase is too general. He must be a man of God in the sense that in him the event has also occurred and that he, like the excited band of women and disciples on the first Easter dawn, keeps exclaiming, "It happened to me." To be sure, the preacher speaks out of more than his own individual experience; he speaks out of the context of the whole witnessing community, the church. And his authority, therefore, rests upon both of these facts: the prolongation of the divine event in his own experience, and the commission laid upon him by the church to witness to the event. Let either of these get out of balance and you get, on the one hand, a distorted individualism or, on the other hand, an irrelevant authoritarianism. And it is in the latter direction, as already indicated, that the danger for Lutheran preaching lies.

It is not enough simply to hand down from the pulpit the content of the faith as the church confesses it, unless the content of that faith has passed through the mind and experience of the preacher and he

3 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

can witness to it, not as a theological concept to be accepted, but as a living deed which has, in fact, happened to him. Here lies the difference between preaching with an "air" of authority, which is irrelevant; and preaching with the "note" of authority, which is indeed a witness to the prolonged event.

And now, perhaps, it should go without saying that the preacher's walk and conversation must reflect his own experience of the saving power of the Gospel. There are instances where sensitive Christian people have been loath to receive the Sacrament because the pastor's life stood in the way of the visible Word on the altar and the communicant. How much more will a man's life stand in the way of the spoken Word on his lips reaching its objective if his life does not give evidence that the divine event to which he bears witness has happened to him?

Much more could be said here, and any pastor who presumes to say it immediately knows himself to be so far from what he is declaring should be the case, that there is a certain bitter irrelevance in the saying of it. I shall not press the point other than to suggest that perhaps the most convincing evidence of our authority as preachers springs from the certain knowledge that of all the sinners to whom we preach, we are the chief.

But beyond the fact that the preacher can say, "It happened to me," he must be able to articulate this experience as the church confesses it in terms which are meaningful to his congregation. I have come recently to dislike right heartily the phrase, "proclaim the Gospel," because it carries with it overtones of this wooden authoritarianism; as if preaching were no more than getting up and making an announcement, regardless of whether anyone hears or understands. The governor can cause a proclamation to be placed on every bulletin board and telephone pole in the state, and he has done his duty whether it is ever read or not. Not so with preaching. Preaching is not preaching unless it strikes home. Preaching which is irrelevant to the minds and lives of the listeners is something less than the Word of God. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. So with preaching. Its message must come to dwell in the minds and lives of the people so that something happens—not in the pulpit but in the pew. This is not to say that it need always be heard receptively. The message may well be rejected, for the Gospel is still a stumbling-block! But it must be presented in such wise that the listener knows that a response is demanded of him: a yes or a no. And

this is the preaching of the divine event, preaching which is a deed and not merely something said.

Here we get involved immediately in the problem of communication. Words, as we know, are but symbols; and speech, as someone has put it, is nothing more than a "highly complex and refined way of signaling to one another." If there is to be communication, therefore, the signals must mean the same thing both to preacher and hearer. This is elementary, and yet it comes home to roost every time we attempt to preach. Words like sin, grace, faith, love may mean one thing to the preacher but quite another to the listener, in which case there is no communication; the preaching is irrelevant. Much preaching is irrelevant on this score because the primary signals used by the preacher are not understood by the listener. By sin, for example, the preacher may mean the soul's rebellion against God; but the listener may take it to mean the little white lie she told her husband over the breakfast table about the cost of her Easter bonnet. There may have been a time when preachers could take for granted that the primary signals used in the Christian pulpit were understood in the same sense by the congregation and they could go on together from there. Today no such assumption can be made.

Which brings us to this: If preaching is to be relevant, the preacher must not only know in his own experience the divine event prolonged, but he must also know and live himself into the lives of his people. He must know the way they think, the language they use, the aspirations and frustrations which are theirs. This is a homely way of saying what Professor W. Fraser Mitchell has written in a recent issue of the *Expository Times*:

> Preaching can never be merely the proclamation of the Gospel: to be both effective and attractive it must be this proclamation made in terms of the cultural experience of a given period. All preaching that has been of value has been saturated with the interests of the time in which it was produced. Men do not live in a vacuum, and they cannot be preached to in a vacuum.[4]

Preaching, therefore, which is concerned solely with the "personal salvation" of the individual apart from his relationship to the social, political, and economic factors which constantly bear upon him, is

4 July, 1952, pp. 305-306.

preaching in a vacuum and is little better than escapist preaching. The preaching of sin, for example, which speaks solely in terms of a man's pride and selfishness with respect to his family, friends, and business relationships, and does not lead him to face his involvement in national pride and thus in the whole problem of international relationships, has not really led him to face his total involvement in sin. Or preaching on love for the neighbor which does not go beyond his immediate, personal relationships and make its claim upon him with respect to the Jew or the Negro, for example, has not begun to present the claim of Christian love upon him in the social context in which he lives. The sermon must speak to the man in the social context in which he lives; it must be made relevant to him in that context, whether he cares to recognize its relevance or not.

This is not to conclude that forthwith we shall preach programs, policies, and pronouncements, though programs, policies and pronouncements may well enter into our preaching. Nor is to suggest in our preaching that when any one of these social "problems" is solved, the Kingdom of God shall thereby be ushered in. The devil has a way of moving along with any advances we are able to make in the social structure.

And yet this particular juncture of history in which we live and in which we preach has its own social context in which the individual is involved. And preaching must speak to the individual in terms which take recognition of his involvement in that social context so that he can see the relevance of this Gospel not just to one or two compartments of his life, but to his total life.

The Preacher and His Reading

By Gilbert P. Voigt

THERE was a time when the preacher was the most scholarly and best-read man in the community. But the work of the minister has changed. Nowadays he has so much administrative and promotional work to do that he has little time for intensive reading. His labor is chiefly with people and programs, not with books and periodicals. As has been well said, he is no longer a student, but an executive; he has no longer a study, but an office. Various and sundry demands are made on his time, demands which make it difficult for him to settle down to quiet and concentrated reading.

Many a present-day minister must feel as did the Rev. Mr. Ingham in Edward Everett Hale's satirical short story, "My Double and How He Undid Me." This tale is as timely today as it was ninety years ago when it first appeared. Ingham was a studious New England minister so sorely beset with demands that he attend all sorts of public gatherings that he was unable to devote due time to his sermons and his pastoral work, let alone systematic reading. In desperation he engaged a double—an ignorant, irascible Irishman—who, however, resembled him closely in form and feature. This double he sent in his stead to all the inconsequential and time-consuming meetings he had heretofore found it advisable to attend. For a short time all went well. He now had time to prepare his sermons carefully, to enjoy his pastoral calls, even to resume his scholarly studies. But, alas, one day the Irishman's fiery temper got the better of him; he resorted to most unclerical language; and the result was that Ingham had to leave town promptly and in disgrace.

There is a second reason why many ministers today do not read more than they do. The inadequate salaries paid them make it difficult for them to buy books or even to subscribe to periodicals. This lamentable situation was brought home to me a few years ago when my nephew, a gifted young pastor, told me that he could not afford to subscribe to a theological quarterly. To meet this situation, the Synod of Indiana in 1940 established a lending library for its ministers. This is an ad-

mirable arrangement. But, even in synods where it is not feasible, a pastor can always borrow from the library of his theological seminary or church college any book not on reserve for special use by the students. Of course, he is expected to return the borrowed volume promptly. He dare not keep it as long as a clerical friend of mine used to retain books borrowed from a college library. When, on one occasion he had to change his dwelling-place, he was chagrined to find that he had in his study perhaps forty books he had borrowed at different times from the library.

But in spite of his scarcity of time and money, the preacher must somehow manage to be a reader. Not a reader for recreation only, although such reading is quite legitimate. I remember one theologian who read faithfully and with relish *The Saturday Evening Post*. I recall another who devoured detective stories. Not merely a reader of pulpit commentaries, either. Such reading, too, has its place, but in moderation. In addition to these two sorts of reading, the preacher must read for weightier reasons. First, in order that he may grow intellectually and thus keep his preaching freshly vital. Even the bread of life, when served in stale or unappetizing form, loses much of its appeal. The preacher who does not read may even draw down upon his head the censure once passed upon a Presbyterian minister: a caustic lawyer, on leaving the church after a service, was overheard to remark to another of the worshipers, "How do you like skimmed milk?"

Writers on pastoral theology emphasize the importance of the preacher's reading. One asserts that new books are essential to the preacher's growth, that he who neglects the reading of new books does so at the peril of his best life, that the surest "way to prevent mental and sermonic stagnation is a persistent use of fresh literature alongside the permanent literature which is at his command." A second thinks that for the minister wide reading is invaluable and that he who neglects to read is shutting the door to "greater service and personal efficiency." A third writer warns the minister that he must find time to read; that growth, enlargement of his soul, is more important than official routine and organizational chores; that he must maintain a study, not an office. Still another author asserts that no minister can be a wise and effective leader of men unless he is all the while a patient learner. And in this process of patient learning reading occupies a large place.

As James Russell Lowell once put it, "The better part of our edu-

cation is the part we give ourselves," that is, after we have completed our formal schooling. This part, he goes on to say, we get largely through reading. The preacher dare never forget that his seminary course is only the beginning of his special training for his lifework; it is almost fatal for him to assume the attitude of a certain young physician who, on setting up an office in my native town, was offered the use of the medical library gathered by one of the experienced physicians of the town. "I don't need to study any more," replied the young man foolishly, "I'm a graduate of a good medical college." Far wiser was another young doctor, who, on his graduation from an excellent medical school, remarked to his mother, "I'm not fit to practice medicine yet; I don't know how to treat a common cold." The latter young man is a thorough student of the science of medicine. It is not surprising, therefore, that he is making a name for himself in the city and the state in which he is located. Every good teacher, too, knows well the danger of stagnation if he stops studying; and if he does stop, the students will soon begin to make disparaging remarks about him.

The question naturally arises, How much can the busy pastor of today, with his many responsibilities and pressures, be expected to read? How many hours a week for reading should he include in his time-budget? I once knew a gifted young preacher, pastor of a large city congregation, who tried to read a book every week. Few ministers can hope to read so much. One professor of theology has advised preachers to try to devote to reading an hour and a half each day from Tuesday to Saturday, inclusive. Better still the practice of a famous physician, one of the Mayo brothers. When his father wisely advised him that, no matter how busy he might be, he should give at least an hour a day to reading and study, he formed this habit, which he was careful never to break except for unavoidable calls of duty. In such instances, moreover, he was careful to make up the lost time later. Another helpful device is this: keep open on your desk a book you are trying to read, and when you have a fragment of time—a half hour or even fifteen minutes—plunge quickly into the volume and read for the spare moments at your disposal. This device once enabled a certain busy pastor to do a surprising amount of reading.

But another question naturally suggests itself. How can the preacher read to best advantage? This question may seem superfluous. For are not practically all clergymen college graduates? Surely they

know how to read skillfully! Of this I am not at all sure. If I may judge by my experience, many of them do not. In one of my classes the professor, himself a skillful reader, soon discovered that we students, with only a single exception college graduates, did not know how to read the textbook effectively. Consequently, throughout that course he taught us not only apologetics but also the art of reading. As a college professor, I have sometimes followed his example. Not long ago a professor of psychology told me that next year he is going to teach his college students less theoretical psychology and instead devote six weeks to instructing them in the art of study, chiefly reading. For the trouble with many college students, he says, is that they do not know how to read effectively.

A number of years ago an honor student in a high-grade college told me that she did not know how to read history: she did not know what was important and what not. She had put her finger on perhaps the chief secret of meaningful and rapid reading. Another secret is the power of quick and close concentration of attention—the avoidance of wool-gathering. A third is fixing in the memory, by deliberate recall, significant facts or principles.

Not all reading matter requires perfect concentration; ordinary prose, it has been said, can be read with a sixty per cent attention; not so, however, scientific, theological, or philosophical prose; certainly not so poetry. Newspapers and much fiction need only be skimmed. Indeed, as Oliver Wendell Holmes once put it, most books we should read *in*, not *through*. Such was the practice of the learned Puritan preacher, Cotton Mather. Many books contain a certain amount of padding in the form of unnecessary details or labored points. Few writers are able to measure up to a modern Frenchman's definition of good writing: "subtle choices of omission." Or to the admirable conciseness of Francis Bacon or Abraham Lincoln. I have considerable sympathy for the busy pastor of a large city congregation who said to one of his former theological professors, "If you run across any new books you think I should read, please tell me of them. But I hope they will be little books." Furthermore, many scholarly books are written in a dull, involved style; they fail to live up to the fundamental principle of good writing, "Economize your reader's attention."

The classic statement of the art of reading is still that of Francis Bacon: "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some

few to be chewed and digested—that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read entirely but not curiously [closely]; and some few are to be read wholly and with diligence and attention."

As has already been suggested, of primary importance to the preacher is systematic and regular reading as part of the weekly routine. Intermittent and desultory reading, only when the spirit moves or when there is nothing else to be done, is never satisfactory. The preacher should have fixed periods for reading; otherwise he is not likely to read. A college manual on the art of reading reminds us that what is done regularly is not likely to be neglected. In maintaining his routine of reading, however, the average minister need not go so far as did an excellent Baptist preacher, who would let positively nothing interfere with his sermonizing in the regular periods he had set aside for it. On one occasion, when a meeting of a synodical committee, of which he was a member, was called for the hour of his sermonizing period, he refused to leave his study to attend the meeting, which was being held across the street from his study, even though other members of the committee had traveled many miles to be present. Even when he was informed that his presence was needed to make up a quorum, he still refused to leave his study. Such a stand is extreme; any fixed routine must allow for emergencies. But the fact remains that the preacher must sometimes exercise considerable will power in resisting temptations to let his reading go undone. For though the spirit may be willing, the flesh is often weak.

It is well, too, for the preacher to read important books with pencil and pad at hand. He should constantly take notes for use in future sermons. Few men have memories so retentive that they can dispense with written notes. Most commendable was the practice of Ralph Waldo Emerson in scrupulously keeping a notebook or journal. In this journal, which he indexed, he had a record of the significant thoughts and observations he had gleaned from his reading, thinking, and travel. When he came to prepare the lyceum lectures by which he earned money, he first chose a topic and then consulted his journal for material he had gathered on this topic. So useful did he find this notebook that he called it his "savings bank." Good teachers take notes constantly on their reading for later use in the classroom.

But just what sort of books and periodicals should the preacher endeavor to read? First of all, a good religious periodical or two. Then

a daily newspaper and a well-edited weekly. These will keep him abreast of the significant events and movements of the day. If he has access to a high-grade monthly, such as *The Atlantic Monthly,* or an excellent quarterly, like *The Yale Review,* he will find in it an occasional illuminating article along with dependable reviews of current books of note. Of these new books he can hope to read only a few. He may well resort to the abridged versions found in *The Omnibook,* just as he may fittingly use the abridged magazine articles found in *The Reader's Digest.* Indeed, he must cultivate the habit of Edgar Allan Poe who, because of his editorial duties, had little time for general reading. Poe's habit was this: to read with intense concentration, to chew and digest, some handbook on a certain subject and thus to gain a mastery of the subject equal to that of many men who had read much on it. For to be widely read is not necessarily to be well read. A choice restricted menu of reading is better than an elaborate but indiscriminate diet.

Are there any particular sorts of religious books the preacher should read? Writers on pastoral theology, I find, recommend three kinds. First, biographies of great men of religion. Second, volumes of great sermons; these should be read not only for ideas and illustrations but also for hints on structure and style. Third and foremost, the Bible. A few years ago a Presbyterian layman said approvingly of his minister, a strong preacher, "Dr. X certainly knows the Bible." I once knew a Lutheran theologian who used to read his Bible twice a day. I recall the practice of a graduate student of theology, now a distinguished theologian and churchman, who every Sunday afternoon read in its entirety some book in the Bible, thus gaining the unity of impression one misses when reading piecemeal.

In addition, the preacher should occasionally read a timely book of the hour, such as Bishop Sherrill's *The Church's Ministry in Our Time,* John Bennett's *Christianity and Communism,* or Reinhold Niebuhr's *Faith and History.* Once in a while the minister will do well to refresh himself on the best methods of preaching or parish work by reading some new book on the subject. Finally, he can always read with profit good religious poetry. I recall a Lutheran minister and theologian who had in his library the complete works of fifteen or more of the greater English and American poets.

The late Washington Gladden went so far as to assert that a minister should continue to study in the pastorate all the subjects he

began to study in the seminary. This is a counsel of perfection. The preacher must be enough of a studious reader to let his congregation feel that he is no "filled pail"—a pail filled with milk skimmed weekly from pulpit commentaries. Rather should he give his hearers the feeling that he is a "flowing spring," pouring forth from deep wells within him the fresh and invigorating water of life. As Francis Bacon long ago pointed out, it is reading that makes the full man, the flowing spring. And the preacher who can preach Sunday after Sunday, year in and year out, without tedious repetition or without running dry, is the preacher who is a reader. A Baptist educator once warned: "The people will be pleased if their minister is a good pastor, a skillful organizer, an accomplished scholar. All these they will, however, forego, if he is a good preacher. That he must be."

The Christian Hope in the New Testament

By Theodore S. Liefeld

A LITTLE over three years ago (October, 1950) the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches announced that the time had come for the Council to "make a serious attempt to declare, in relation to the modern world, the faith and hope which are affirmed in its own basis and by which the Churches live." Toward that accomplishment a commission of twenty-five representative laymen and theologians was set up to do the preliminary work, and held its first meeting in July, 1951. They decided to concentrate their attention on the subject of the Christian hope, opening a "conversation" on the subject, and suggesting as possible themes, "The Crucified Lord, the Hope of the World," or "The Crucified and Risen Lord, the Hope of the World." This should be the theme of the Evanston Assembly (August, 1954), and subsidiary themes of the Assembly should be considered in relation to it.

Two reports have been prepared and published by the Advisory Commission, the First Report in July, 1951, and the Second Report in September, 1952.[1] Out of these and some supplementary releases the liveliest theological discussion of our generation has developed, as witness the content of nearly every theological journal currently published.[2]

It is not our intention to engage in a thorough evaluation of the Commission reports. But brief summaries and a few observations, for the benefit of those unfamiliar with the reports, may prove helpful in establishing the "climate" for the fulfilling of our own purpose.

The First Report follows a simple, three-part structure. First, it endeavors to express the nature of the Christian hope and its place in the total Christian revelation and theology. Second, it points out the

1 Available from the New York Office of the World Council of Churches, 156 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

2 Fullest treatment has appeared in *The Ecumenical Review*, especially in the Oct., 1950, Oct., 1951, Jan., 1952, April, 1952, July, 1952, and Oct., 1952, issues. See also the Oct., 1953, issue of *Theology Today*.

relevance of this hope to the present world situation, especially over against false hopes and prevalent hopelessness. And third, it portrays the Christian hope as the church's means of recovery from worldliness and disunity, and the source of renewal of its life and message.

Objection has been raised to a number of features present or absent in this First Report. It has been called "unduly apocalyptic" (in the first section there are seven references to "his coming" again) by some who feel that the apocalyptic figures of biblical eschatology are more the reflection of the contemporary world view than of revelation and theology. Others find it overly pessimistic in regard to the present world, offering little encouragement save in the ultimate "hope." It has been faulted for its dominant concern with hope for the world and history, and relatively little message of hope for the individual facing death ("eternal life" is a concept strikingly absent).

Despite these and some other criticisms, a few of which we share —particularly the last previously mentioned—we are much heartened by the evidences which this report brings of a progressive theological deepening of the ecumenical movement. Here the concern is not so much "how" shall the church witness, but "what" is its witness—what does the Word of revelation have to say to our day. Eschatologically, the answer is clearly given in terms of the crucified and risen Christ, who is the Lord of history. The whole of the Christian hope is grounded in the resurrection of him who was crucified, and the return to glory of him who is risen.

The Second Report, which incorporates the reactions and further discussion of the intervening year, was formulated by twenty commissioners, fifteen of whom collaborated on the previous effort. The product is much more elaborated, with obvious effort at adjustment to some criticisms, clarification of ambiguities, and, we suspect, resolution of some theological tensions in a common denominator that is not always adequate or consistent.

In summary, the Report reemphasizes that the New Testament is full of references to a salvation yet to be revealed, and a Kingdom yet to come. But, this Report stresses, the whole of biblical imagery and symbolism are not to be understood literally. (We accept the authors' distinction between the errors of "extreme apocalypticism" and "true eschatology." But in leaving the impression that *all* apocalyptic emphases are to be discounted, they brush aside an inescapable and significant

element in New Testament eschatology.)[3] Because the certain Christian hope encompasses the future, the Report goes on, it also governs the present. God in his faithfulness will complete what he has begun. "Faith already possesses the title-deed of that on which our hope is set." The powers of the New Age already work among us, based on what God has accomplished in Jesus Christ, but the final unveiling of this accomplishment is awaited. Through his resurrection the Lordship of Christ is already declared; this will be fully manifest in his return. Christians, who find in him and his resurrection the source of their hope, must live unconformed to this world, sharing in his passion, in the fellowship of his sufferings. "It is only from the foot of the cross that hope can be proclaimed." Present experience and future hope cannot be separated from each other.

Five chapters and twenty-six pages elaborate these thoughts. In the first chapter, the addition of an extensive biblical apologetic both helps and hinders. Eight eschatological passages are analyzed and implications drawn. The selections do not all justify themselves as the most representative. More seriously, one at times wonders whether one is being offered exegesis or biblical "hooks" from which are suspended hope parallels from philosophies of religion.

It should be added that Chapter II seeks to clarify the distinction between the specifically *Christian* hope and the messianic hopes of other religions. But one is left, here and elsewhere, with the feeling that the group was unable to agree on a thoroughly biblical expression of the radical nature of evil in man (in terms of rebellion and bondage), and compromised on a synthesis of evolutionary sin and redemption.

Chapter III singles out three false hopes—Stalinism, Scientific Humanism, and Democratic Utopianism—as the competing utopias providing hope-dynamic for countless lives today. Some have found the report unduly harsh in treatment of these rival faiths. Others will find the analyses not harsh enough in considering these utopias as primarily deficient or misguided rather than fundamentally evil.

In its discussion of the "Earthly Calling" (Chapter IV), the Report encounters most seriously the problem of harmonizing present and future eschatologically. Is it possible to compromise the antithetical

3 See Otto Piper, "Hope Against Hope," in the Feb. 25, 1953, issue of *The Christian Century*, and Charles T. Fritsch, "The Message of Apocalyptic for Today," in the Oct., 1953, *Theology Today*.

"schools": the futuristic, nihilistic, "worse and worse" outlook (many Continental theologians) with the historical optimism of the "social gospellers" (in the tradition of Harnack and Troeltsch)?

The final and very brief chapter—an admitted after-thought—points to the "Church's Mission," that is, world evangelism. The task of proclaiming the word of hope to the nations scarcely needs establishing. Its implementation will be a responsibility of Evanston.

Lest these summary observations regarding the two reports have given a generally negative impression, let us again affirm our gratitude for the degree of positive, evangelical, Christo-centric unanimity which they reflect in a theological area where centuries-long differences within Christendom are real and sharp. May we not hope that the Spirit, through these preparations and the Evanston Assembly itself, will bring his church to a still clearer understanding of its eschatology?

But our major obligation, though in many ways anticipated, is still unfulfilled. The formulation of our subject, "The Christian Hope in the New Testament," does not call simply for a word study. But it does imply consideration of the New Testament term for hope, and its use. And that in turn demands at least summary recall of Old Testament antecedents.

Old Testament usage is both helpful and confusing, since *elpis* is found in the Septuagint to express an expectation of an either good or bad sort (*tikwah*); in the latter case it may even express fear. When it is used to express hope of a positive sort, it is very closely related to trust—for example, as equivalent for *betach* and *mibtach*. It frequently occurs in translation of *machseh*, that in which one confides or to which one flees for refuge. Perhaps most generally it appears in a context expressing the idea that Yahweh is the hope of Israel and of the pious Israelite. For example, in Psalm 130:5, 7, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope." "Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." Or again, Jeremiah 14:8, where the Lord is addressed as "the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble." It commonly expresses, then, an expectation of good, centering in the integrity and reliability of God, and involving on the part of the one who hopes patient waiting and assurance of refuge.

In the New Testament, the noun *elpis* does not occur at all in the

Gospels. Its absence from the Gospel context, as an experience contingent on total redemptive fulfillment, is partially explained by I Peter 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. . . ." While the verb (*elpizo*) occurs five times in the Gospels, three instances (all in Luke) have no theological import, and the other two (Matt. 12:21 and John 5:45) convey essentially the Old Testament idea of "trust."

It is, then, the epistolary writers, and particularly St. Paul, who develop the positive Christian idea of hope as that centers in and derives from God's redemptive acts in Christ—above all, the resurrection. So in Romans 5:2 Paul says, "Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God." In I Timothy he or his spokesman speaks of "God our Saviour, and Jesus Christ our hope" (1:1), and he speaks to the Colossians (1:27) about "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (*Christos . . . he elpis tes doxes*). He also likes to describe himself as having been made a minister of the "Gospel-hope" (Col. 1:23). "By hope were we saved" (Rom. 8:24); since no one hopes for what he sees, and our ultimate salvation is not yet apparent, we must patiently wait for it. We find Paul frequently coupling these ideas of hope and patience. In I Peter 3:15 Christians are exhorted to be ready to give a defense of the hope which they have in Christ, and the author of I John (3:2, 3) suggests the Christian hope as a motive for purity: "Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every one who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure." In somewhat parallel fashion Paul indicates that the love which the Colossians have for all the saints stems from the hope they know, which is laid up for them in heaven (Col. 1:5).

For the writer to the Hebrews, hope is the "anchor of the soul." It is significant how frequently he used the phrase "hope unto the end" —*elpis axri* or *mexri telous* (3:6; 6:11; 10:23, etc.). Of course, we are particularly interested in Hebrews 11:1 in this connection. *Elpizomenon hypostasis,* assurance of the hoped for, is a reflection of the more general Septuagint hope idea; the second thought, *elengxos ou blepomenon,* conviction of the unseen, emphasizes the paradoxical character of hope. It is absolute certainty of the future, but the future does not rest in our

hands; it is completely outside of our sphere of influence or control, and the believer cannot count on those things with which he himself could build his future, the things of the world. Romans 8:24ff. offers the same emphasis: those things which can be seen belong to the world of *sarx* and cannot be the basis for man's hope. Man cannot place his hope on *proskaira* (the temporary) but only on God and the eternal (*aionia*). Christians are distinguished from non-Christians, who have no hope (I Thess. 4:13), and who, being without hope, are without God in the world (Eph. 2:12). Christians ward off evil with the helmet which is the hope of salvation (I Thess. 5:8). They live in an attitude of looking for that blessed hope which is the hope of eternal life—*elpis zoes aioniou* (Titus 3:7).

The Christian *elpis,* therefore, is founded on the act of salvation which God performed in Christ, and since this is an eschatological act of salvation, *elpis* is also an eschatological element of salvation. It expresses trust in the faithfulness of God in keeping his promises to men. Those promises have very little to do with any this-worldly prospects; certainly, at least, they are not related to any secular optimism, the primary point of reference always being the return of the Lord Jesus at the end of the age. Perhaps no New Testament passage more clearly expresses the *telos* element than I Peter 1:13, "Set your hope fully upon the grace that is coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ"—that is, the *parousia.*

And finally we cite perhaps the most enlightening passage of all, the classic Christmas Epistle, which anchors the Christian life in *both* Christ events: "For the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope (*prosdexomenoi ten maxarian elpida*), the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds" (Titus 2:11-14). May we not say that the Christian hope is the confidence that what Christ has done in the past guarantees for us the participation in what Christ will do in the future?

As to the characteristics of this hope, Bultmann suggests that it

embraces three elements: (1) expectation of that which is to come; (2) trust; (3) the patience of waiting, or endurance (*erwarten*).[4]

Is it clearly distinguishable, theologically and psychologically, from faith? Richardson suggests that "faith" is placed in God's mighty acts for our salvation, which he has wrought in the *past,* while "hope" is placed in the final consummation of our salvation in the *future.*[5]

In this connection we recall Luther's rather elaborate analysis of faith-hope differences in his commentary on Galatians. He himself raises the question, on the basis of Galatians 5:5, "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." He asks, "What difference is there between faith and hope?" And then he goes on,

> We find it difficult to see any difference. Faith and hope are so closely linked that they cannot be separated. Still there is a difference between them.
>
> First, hope and faith differ in regard to their sources. Faith originates in the understanding, while hope rises in the will. Secondly, they differ in regard to their functions. Faith says what is to be done. Faith teaches, describes, directs. Hope exhorts the mind to be strong and courageous. Thirdly, they differ in regard to their objectives. Faith concentrates on the truth. Hope looks to the goodness of God. Fourthly, they differ in sequence. Faith is the beginning of life before tribulation (Hebrews 11). Hope comes later and is born of tribulation (Romans 5). Fifthly, they differ in regard to their effects. Faith is a judge. It judges errors. Hope is a soldier. It fights against tribulations, the cross, despondency, despair, and waits for better things to come in the midst of evil. Without hope faith cannot endure. On the other hand, hope without faith is blind rashness and arrogance because it lacks knowledge. Before everything else a Christian must have the insight of faith, so that the intellect may know its directions in the day of trouble and the heart may hope for better things. By faith we begin, by hope we continue.[6]

The foregoing has deliberately by-passed a number of considerations; despite such omissions it may still add up to what is commonly referred to as the New Testament eschatology. But a further decisive question is, *How much* does it add up to? In other words, how essential is eschatology to the *kerygma?* how dominant is the eschatological note in the New Testament? And how is the eschatological element to be understood and related to the rest of the revelation? Obviously our effort to answer these questions must be restricted and partial.

4 R. Bultmann, art. *elpis* in G. Kittel, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament,* II, 527 ff.

5 Alan Richardson, art. "Hope" in *A Theological Word Book of the Bible,* p. 109.

6 *Luther's Commentary on Galatians,* transl. by Theodore Graebner, Zondervan, p. 227.

It is generally recognized that all the writings of the New Testament canon do not speak precisely the same language on this subject. While all of them, except III John and Philemon, seem to have something to say, direct or incidental, regarding hopes and expectations concerning the future and the "last things," there is certainly variation in emphasis and in the seeming importance attached to eschatology by the different writers. In some the theme is central, in others more peripheral.

When we think of the Synoptic Gospels, we are reminded of Jesus' use of many terms and ideas normally classified as current eschatology, if not Jewish apocalyptic: the idea of two spiritual kingdoms (of good and evil), the thought of two ages (present and coming), the conceptions of a resurrection and a final judgment; his constant use of the term "Son of man," his portrayal of life beyond death or judgment, his use of imagery for the Messianic age, such as the great feast, or the return of the bridegroom, and so on. But perhaps the central issue to be decided, so far as eschatological implications are concerned, appears in the question, What did Jesus mean by the Kingdom of God? Without introducing passages which are generally familiar, certainly a study of the many pertinent references leaves no doubt that sometimes Jesus spoke of the Kingdom as present. It was something which had arrived. God's redemptive power was active in the world. But it is equally clear that he also spoke of the Kingdom as future. Men would be able to inherit it, and were to look for its coming.

Attempts to find a consistent solution for this dual temporal reference have led to many interpretive deviations in the history of theology and biblical analysis, which may conveniently be reduced to four.

At the one extreme, and largely in the tradition of Kant, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, and Hermann, have been those who rejected the eschatological aspect of Jesus' teaching altogether. For them the Kingdom is an ethical responsibility, their concern is man's task under God for the building of the Kingdom here and now. In the words of R. N. Flew, the Kingdom for them is "the Utopia which some day is to be established on earth by human progress or by human effort. It is the new social order, when God's will is done."[7] It is our sure conviction that this interpretation of the meaning of the Kingdom finds little support in the Gospels and may now be regarded as the radical optimism

7 R. N. Flew, *Jesus and His Church*, p. 27.

of an earlier liberalism, which has undergone considerable sobering in recent years.

Inevitable reaction came, first with Johannes Weiss, with his reminder that the Kingdom is not something men work for, but wait for, and then with his famous disciple Albert Schweitzer, whose name is coupled today with the phrase, "Thoroughgoing Eschatology." Jesus, he contends, did not seek to bring in the Kingdom, but warned people as to its immanence. The essence of his message was "Repent." In view of the nearness of its coming, Schweitzer says, "Jesus' ministry counted *only* on the eschatological realization of the Kingdom."[8] As the Kingdom was future, so also was the Messiah. Misguided in his enthusiasm, Jesus went to Jerusalem, not to conquer, but to die. This view has been a healthy corrective, forcing recognition of the other-worldly element in the Gospel. But it seriously undermines any genuine self-consciousness in Jesus, and its "interim-ethic" virtually disposes of any sound ethical motivation in Jesus' teaching.

Here, then, have been two either-or extremes, the one stressing ethics to the exclusion of eschatology, the other focusing on eschatology to the exclusion of ethics. Beyond these, a few words are in order regarding two mediating positions.

The one view, commonly called "Realized Eschatology," was anticipated by von Dobschütz in his 1910 publication, *The Eschatology of the Gospels,* but is today more generally associated with the name of C. H. Dodd. Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom, he says, as a present (or realized) fact. This is the "mystery of the Kingdom"—that the *eschaton* is now a matter of actual experience; therefore there is no long historical perspective. Such parables as those of the faithful and unfaithful servants (Matt. 24 and Luke 12), or the thief at midnight, commonly interpreted as referring to the *parousia,* Dodd claims refer to a situation already existent. They are a comment on the unpreparedness of Judaism in Jesus' time, and are appeals to recognize the presence of the Kingdom. Perhaps it can be said that most of those espousing the "realized eschatology" view maintain an agnostic "no comment" attitude toward the future. Rather than interpreting the New Testament prophetic elements in a temporal way, they interpret them in a qualitative way. That is, the resurrection of the Christian believer refers not primarily to an event taking place at the temporal end of

8 Albert Schweitzer, *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God,* p. 93.

human history, but to the element of the risen life of Christ now evident in the life and conduct of the believer.

It scarcely need be added that the Fourth Gospel is the best documentary source for such an interpretation. He who believes *"has* eternal life" (3:36); and eternal life is "knowing the only true God, and . . . Jesus Christ" (17:3). Present actuality is emphasized in many places. When Martha expresses her conviction that Lazarus shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day (11:23), Jesus seems to correct her: resurrection is the new life of the believer in Christ, who "shall never die." So also with the judgment; the man who hears and believes has already escaped the judgment; he "does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (5:24). Conversely, the man who has not believed "has been judged already" (3:18). "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out" (12:31). It is also noteworthy that the Gospel of John contains no parallel to the apocalyptic chapter of the Synoptic Gospels (Mark 13 and the Matthean and Lukan parallels). Instead, "Now is the Son of Man glorified" (13:31).

Dodd, of course, finds his complete justification here. But he conveniently overlooks the "futurist" element even in the Fourth Gospel. For example, Jesus' statements that he "will raise the believer up at the last day" (6:40), that "the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God," that is, "all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice and shall come forth" (5:28), either to a "resurrection of life" or a "resurrection of judgment." Or again, "he that hates his life in this world (*kosmos*), shall keep it unto life eternal" (12:25). Likewise, a number of the apocalyptic "signs," familiar from the Synoptics, appear in this Gospel. Perhaps, as H. A. Guy has suggested, what we have in John is not the repudiation, nor even the sublimation, of eschatology, but the "union of mysticism and eschatology."[9]

The other mediating view is represented best by T. W. Manson.[10] In essence, his theory holds that in the former part of his ministry Jesus spoke of the Kingdom as coming. It is at hand; men are to pray for its appearance; they will inherit it in the future. In the latter part of his ministry he spoke of it as something already present; men enter it here and now and realize its actuality. The point of transition Manson finds

9 H. A. Guy, *The New Testament Doctrine of the 'Last Things,'* p. 171.
10 T. W. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus,* pp. 161 ff.

in the Caesarea Philippi incident (Mark 8:28 ff., and parallels). This was "the recognition of the Kingdom in the person of Jesus; and with that recognition the Kingdom can be said to have come." Rather than being a matter of either natural evolution, or supernatural revolution, the Kingdom has three aspects, says Manson: it is an eternal fact; it received its first manifestation in the disciples of Jesus; and it has a consummation still to come. There is, then, no one consistent conception of the Kingdom throughout the teaching of Jesus, and hence there is no point in asking whether it is present or future.

Additional differences of eschatological viewpoint were introduced in connection with the preliminary analysis of the Evanston Assembly reports—among them the controversial issue of literal or figurative apocalyptic. We would only add one additional word, for we are constrained to register our serious misgivings concerning those millenialistic movements which not only elevate deutero-canonical literature to first prominence in the New Testament, but interpret its apocalyptic imagery and symbolism so literalistically that they produce a picture of the Christian hope which is far removed from both its real center, which is Christ, and from everyday life.

And now, does all of this lead us to any solid theological convictions? Assuming agreement that the language and contents of the New Testament message are eschatological, and that its conception of history, which is directed toward a *telos*, is eschatological, hope becomes a distinctive and characteristic feature of Christian existence. It is a hope centered in Christ—the Christ of the two advents—who is the central fact of history and the end of history, and the central present reality in the life of the believer. He is our starting point and goal, and life is lived between his incarnation and resurrection and his parousia. But man's hope is not fixed solely on the end of history, or beyond history, but finds fulfillment also in the present time; it is marked by both "now" and "then." Temporally, it is not a matter of either-or but of both-and. To quote Professor Stählin, of Erlangen, "This dual reference of the New Testament message sets all its essential terms into a double temporal relation, and in every case each relation is as important as the other; whether it be the Kingdom which was established in Christ, and whose coming in the glorious future we pray for; or the sonship which we enjoy as brethren of Jesus Christ,

and for which the earnest expectation of the creature is waiting; or the judgment which is pronounced now in the acceptance or the rejection of the Word, and which will be manifested to the whole world at the end of history; or the devil who is defeated by Christ, and who yet will be cast down through his second coming."[11]

To be in Christ—that is hope: a hope realized in his first coming and resurrection victory, a hope to be realized in all the remaining days of his continuing presence and continual coming, and a hope to be realized fully at his final triumph. For the individual it means being in Christ here in the world, being with him after death away from the world, and being under him in a world of righteousness. For the cosmos it means the end of the age and history, judgment, resurrection, the parousia, and the renovation of all things. All intervening secular history finds its meaning and significance in its relation to the ongoing divine process, which is the history of salvation.

Christus solus spes mundi. We who experience the joyful, patient hope generated by the Christ who has come, and who will come again, are the church; and as the church we become the visible hope for the world.

11 G. Stahlin, "Hope in the New Testament," in *The Meaning of Hope in the Bible*, Ecumenical Studies, No. A5, Oct., 1952.

Notes and Studies

DOES PRAYER MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE

By Wallace E. Fisher

EXCEPT for the nature of God and the nature of man, no subject in the field of religion has received more attention than the subject of prayer. In any discussion group representing a fair cross-section of American society this question can precipitate debate. There are those who insist quite vigorously that prayer makes all the difference in the world, and to be equally honest in the matter, there are those who insist quite earnestly that prayer does not change anything, that it is, at best, a pleasant sort of nonsense. Indeed, there are those who go even further and insist that prayer robs a man of initiative, self-respect, and courage.

And it is, I think, a common fault with most of us who believe in Christ to claim either too much for prayer or to claim too little. Some of us make sweeping claims which neither the New Testament nor our own Christian experience will support. Refusing to consider prayer in the light of God's nature and our own, some Christians exaggerate the power of prayer and never come within a sea mile of telling the real truth about it. This approach, rampant among pietists and fundamentalists, offends and alienates ever so many prayerful people who could and should be brought into the fellowship of prayer.

On the other hand, some of us Christians claim too little for the power of prayer. Conditioned by mass secular education, impressed by the technological miracles of modern science, and preoccupied with the mechanics of physical survival, some of us have relegated prayer to a minor place in our daily quest for bread, security, and love. I suppose all of us pray most earnestly in emergencies, in the grim moment of crisis, but otherwise the prayers of most of us are sharply out of touch with reality. We do not pray very much, if at all, for our mate, our children, our parents, our church, our community, or our world. Indeed, many of us do not pray very much for ourselves. And our contemporary culture encourages us along these lines, in spite of the fact that most of us are in personal trouble and all of us are in trouble socially. Too many Christians simply do not claim enough for prayer and, therefore, close out its tremendous power.

Steering a course between these two extremes, that of claiming too much for prayer and that of claiming too little, we want to consider what difference prayer makes.

1. Prayer makes a difference in the natural world. There are dependable natural laws, to be sure, but science itself no longer adheres to the mechanical world structure which Descartes and Newton gave us. Quantum physics insists that there is tremendous unpredictability in the realm of nature. Certain basic

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laws are unalterable in the natural world, but within the broad framework there are all sorts of variations and variables. When in 1903 the scientist, Dr. Alexis Carrel, admitted that a dying tubercular patient beyond the reach of medicine was cured by prayer, he irritated a host of early twentieth century scientists.

How different the intellectual climate is today! Trained minds have a much broader point of view in these matters. One evening, to take only one example, the newspaper reported that a leading physician, speaking before his colleagues, advocated telling a patient when he was beyond the reach of medicine. "But," said the doctor, "you must never insist that this is the end of the matter. Medical science is not an absolute science. Unpredicted recoveries do occur!" Or to take another avenue of approach, let us remember that psychosomatic medicine keeps reminding our thoughtful but tense society that an ulcerated stomach which can become cancerous may very well have begun as ulcerated emotions. We are not nearly so materialistic about these matters as we once were. The life of the spirit affects quite really the health of the body. You will not misunderstand me. We are not making the unforgivable mistake of suggesting that the mind constitutes reality and the body is illusory; both are realities. We are simply insisting that the mind is the higher reality of the two and that each interacts on the other. And so a trained person is not as quick today to dismiss the miracles of Jesus as he was fifty or even twenty years ago.

By way of outline summary, then, we can say that in the realm of nature our prayers are plainly conditioned by certain natural laws. Obviously, a man cannot jump from the top of a tall building and then arrest his descent at the fourth floor by a torrent of prayer. But we are missing potential power if, in addition to medical help, we refuse to pray about our cardiac trouble, our asthmatic condition, our emotional problems. The power of prayer is immeasurable in the realm of nature, and the power is primarily conditioned and directed by God's purposes for each of us.

2. Prayer makes a tremendous difference in how we face up to and handle life's inevitable situational tensions. By the very nature of life we live with inner tensions and we are confronted by external tensions. The bigger the job we hold, the wider the responsibilities we assume, the more fresh trails we try to blaze, just so much more intense are life's situational tensions. Some people resolve these tensions by going to pieces, some simply ease the tensions by drifting with majority opinion, some avoid the tensions by living on the side-lines. But ever so many people face up to and handle life's situational tensions quite constructively because they find fresh insights and stamina in some closet prayer room. That is how Mr. Lincoln rose above the terrible situational tension of civil strife and emerged with an answer that over-matched the problem.

Or, if we wish to be contemporary, let us recall the crushing situational tension which confronted Federal Judge Harold Medina as he handled the famous trial of a dozen Communists in New York several years ago. The tensions inherent in that situation, especially for the judge who was expected to keep an impartial court, would have broken most men. But Judge Medina handled himself

and the controversial trial so ably and so fairly that his name is now inscribed in legal history. Quite pertinent to our discussion here is the fact that Harold Medina announced publicly after the trial that his practice of daily prayer and his life-long reliance on God kept him from going to pieces.

The simple truth is this: if we really know how to pray, and if we really do pray, we shall not be spared situational tensions but we shall be more than equal to any of these tensions which life imposes upon us.

3. Prayer makes all the difference in the world as to whether we finally become an integrated personality or keep on living with divided, warring selves inside us. Unless we cure this raging civil war of inner selves we shall lose our power for constructive action and become bitterly frustrated people. The Lord God made us for fellowship with himself, and we are restless, destructive beings until we regain our consciousness of him and his purpose in every decision we make. Until we establish the home he approves and accept the full responsibilities he built into it, until we engage full-time in the vocation or profession which has his clear-cut endorsement, until we gain a sense of responsibility for broken humanity everywhere, until we can look with concern beyond our own "tight little island" of self-interest—until that day dawns for a man he has not found his true self, and so he grows increasingly unhappy living with his false self.

Real Christian prayer, linked with worship and careful searching of the Scriptures, brings us face to face with God's own picture of ourselves, the only true picture that exists. There is no other place to find our real self except in his presence. There we know what we are really like. And without this painful but accurate picture we shall live on with a false picture of ourselves and so destroy our Christ-inspired opportunity to have born in us a whole new self. There is mystery here, of course, but all those who have fellowship with Christ are on the "high road" to an integrated, healthy personality. That is the "wholeness" of being that Christ shares with his very own.

THE MEANING OF THE ASCENSION

By Hans-Werner Bartsch[1]

THE Festival of the Ascension is as strange to us today as the story recorded in Acts 1:1-12 is difficult for us to understand. How little the festival means to us is evident from the caricature into which it has long since degenerated. The reason for this is that the story has come to be nothing more than a fairy tale out of the dim past whose meaning we have lost. But for some reason we do not quite

1 Translated by Martin J. Heinecken from Hans-Werner Bartsch's *Die Anrede Gottes: Das biblische Wort dem modernen Menschen dargeboten* (Hamburg: Herbert Reich, 1953), a small collection of sermons which illustrates the application of the current "demythologization" to preaching. See Paul Leo, "Kerygma and Mythos: the Theology of Rudolf Bultmann," in The Lutheran Quarterly, V (Nov., 1953), pp. 359-370.

dare to forget it entirely and to abolish the festival. Is this an inconsistency on the part of modern man? Only apparently so; for behind this reluctance lurks the knowledge, or at least the suspicion, that we have to do here with more than just a fairy tale which has lost its significance for us because we happen to know that there is no such heaven as the teller of the story imagined. *We must therefore ask ourselves, if we can no longer believe in the same kind of heaven as those who first told the story, what the meaning of the ascension is.* What actual event which can have meaning for us lies behind the story?

This is something quite different from what the church has made of the story. Most of our hymns for this festival celebrate a new triumph of Christ, as if by the event here recorded the divinity of Jesus has been really established, as if by it he had for the first time been elevated to his rightful place. But one good look at the context of the story will reveal quite the opposite. The disciples of Jesus had been brought together by the news that Jesus was alive. Again and again during those forty days of which Luke writes different persons had come to report that they had seen him. The band of the disciples lived in the knowledge that he was with them, that there was nothing that could possibly keep him from appearing again in their midst. After forty days this experience suddenly came to an end. This is in simple words the sober truth of the event that lies behind this story. The appearances of the risen Lord ceased.

We can hardly imagine what a shock this was for the band of disciples. They had lived in the hope, expressed in the story, that now Jesus would set up the kingdom of heaven for which they had been longing and hoping, that now the fruits of his victory would be openly displayed. But in this expectation they were mistaken.

This is something that we can surely understand, because it is true for us, too, that Christ is no longer on this earth. The shock the disciples felt we can still feel today. Has not our faith been jolted time and again by the realization that there is so little evidence of the power of this Christ in our world? The same question rises up to plague the believer today, and the unbeliever triumphantly throws it into his face: *Where now is your God?* This is what prevents so many, many people from believing—that there is no evidence of God's power, to say nothing of his love, upon the earth.

So the story shows us how utterly sober the band of disciples was. They did not live in a fantastic dream world. They were willing to face the truth, the truth that Christ was no longer visible to them. And now we are challenged to be equally realistic and sober, not to plague ourselves with attempts of one kind or another to prove God's existence. We must be willing to admit that in this world of ours it really looks as if God had no concern for us.

The church soon lost this realistic understanding of the disciples. Time and again it tried to discern God's actions in history. With all kinds of devices it endeavored to read into world events the loving and providential hand of God and thus to prove his presence there. The ascension story challenges us to be as realistic as the first disciples and to face the fact that it is indeed true that we cannot discern

God's actions in this world. God dwells in darkness, and we shall have to make the most of it.

But this is not all that the ascension story tells us. It tells us of the different way in which the disciples faced their desperation. This is the way of faith. In the face of the fact that God dwells in darkness, faith speaks its defiant "nevertheless." The disciples do not try to meet the fact that Jesus no longer appears among his own with all kinds of clever tricks to prove his existence, but they meet it with the witness of their faith.

This becomes clear to us when we read that men in white garments, angelic figures, gave them the answer to their desperate question. For it was as true for them as it is for us that angels are not the kind of creatures one can find anywhere in this world to call up as witnesses. Therefore the witness of the disciples to what the angels told them was not an evidence from this world but a gift granted to them by the undemonstrable power of God.

The insight of faith, which kept the disciples from giving up in despair, proclaims two things. For one thing they were convinced that Jesus is still the living One. The cessation of further appearances does not mean that he had died a second time. His going away cannot undermine their Easter faith. It means, rather, that Jesus is now with God, just as surely as for us today heaven can have only this one meaning, namely, "being with God," no matter where or how we conceive of this "being with God." And out of this, then, grows that other certainty: he will come again in glory.

It is therefore nothing else than the Easter faith which is here for the first time put to the test, and the Easter faith meets every recurring test with the same simple and confident assurance. In this ascension story assurance is revealed as the faith which does not see and yet believes, the faith of one whom Jesus, in his encounter with the unbelieving Thomas, called blessed. Ever since the event to which the ascension witnesses it will forever be true for the church of Jesus Christ that those who do not see and yet believe are blessed. The Festival of the Ascension calls us to this faith, the faith which holds firmly to the assurance that the resurrected One is the living One, even though we live in a world where this faith can find no support in any kind of proof. In this faith the church waits until that day in which it will be vindicated, the day of Christ's return.

The Festival of the Ascension calls us to this faith. We shall not be able to escape the challenge by seeking to hide behind our inability to understand. For what the story of the ascension means to tell us can be understood readily enough, as we have seen, even though we no longer believe in a heaven above the curtain of the sky.

We are sufficiently aware that the world no longer can furnish any proofs of the presence of God or of Christ. The world today appears to us to be as far away from God as ever it was. The perversions and the cruelties of our day leave little room for God and his love. The question is whether or not we shall be able to overcome the despair of being forsaken of God in the way in which that band of disciples did. Shall we be able to join in their defiant "nevertheless" of faith?

Shall we cling to him whom we do not see as if we did see him? This has nothing to do with belief in a heaven above the curtain of the sky or with astounding happenings which are alien to our understanding. This is a question of free decision.

We must see that the decision which the Gospel calls us to make is decisive for our whole life. If we do not succeed in finding this Easter faith, a faith strong enough to stand in every trial, then our life will remain without God. Then we shall be thrown back entirely on what we see in our experience and must live in a world which is out of touch with God, a world which is really forsaken of God. Let him who thinks he can endure it try to live in this way.

As Matthias Claudius wrote in a letter to his nephew, Andrew, this is what the church has said through the years: If anyone is unwilling to believe in Christ, let him see to it how he will get along without him. You and I, Andrew, we are not up to it. We need someone to carry us and to hold us as long as we live, and when we come to die, as we all must, then we need someone to put his hand beneath our head and support it. This he can do, according to all reports, and we know of no one else to whom we would rather entrust ourselves.

BACKGROUND OF THE HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY

By David Belgum

MODERN hospital chaplains follow in the path marked out by religion's traditional concern for sickness and healing. Although the modern chaplaincy movement was pioneered in the twenties by such leaders as Anton Boisen,[1] primitive societies considered priest and medicine man synonymous.

Early organized religion in Greece subsumed healing under the regular functions of temple priests. Special provisions were made for it. In the temples of Aesculapius at Cos, Rhodes, and Epidaurus "a differentiation among priests . . . took place and some of them became concerned exclusively with medical ministrations."[2]

The hospital-like nature of the temple is indicated by the fact that pilgrims coming from distant parts were segregated from the community in special temple rooms "in which [they] rested after their journey and prepared themselves for their initiation. They listened to addresses from attendant priests and others, had their minds prepared, and were eventually admitted into the inner shrine, where they often spent the night on couches specially prepared for them, and much of the treatment was supposed to come to them in their sleep."[3]

Although the Hebrews were a nomadic people, and therefore not inclined, as

1 Ram Dutt, *The Pioneer Work of Anton Boisen With Schizophrenia* (Boston University: Ph.D. Dissertation, 1950).

2 E. H. Lewinski-Corwin, "Hospitals and Sanatoria," in *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* (1932), VII, 464-465.

3 William Brown, *Personality and Religion* (London, 1946), p. 72.

were the Greeks, to establish permanent temples in the early part of their history, there was a moral attitude toward the sick and the stranger which can be considered an antecedent to the institutional care of the sick in hospitals. This idea of hospitality was evidenced by Abraham in offering water for the washing of feet and in providing rest for a stranger (Gen. 18:2-5). In Jeremiah (9:2) there is reference to "a lodging place of wayfaring men." This may have been an actual hostel, but in any case it suggests the idea of hospitality and refuge for those in need. The Jews were anxious to provide for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. Often the sick were provided for by segregation; lepers were classified as "unclean" and lived in the hills. It was left for later times to integrate the idea of hospitality with the needs of the sick and combine the two elements into the hospital as an institution.

The healing miracles of Jesus indicate a change in attitude toward sickness. Instead of merely protecting the community by segregating the sick, the individual sick person was to be ministered to, healed, and cared for. The parable of the Good Samaritan portrays the wounded man treated with utmost consideration, brought to an inn, and cared for until he recovered. When Jesus healed lepers, he sent them to the priests to have their healing certified. Jesus instituted healing as a regular part of the work of the disciples: ". . . they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:18). When Jesus sent out the seventy, he instructed them to "heal the sick that are therein, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you' " (Luke 10:9). Peter and John followed this admonition in healing a lame man (Acts 3:2-11). Paul had a similar experience at Lystra (Acts 14:8-10). Peter's reputation became so great "that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them" (Acts 5:15). This seems to include both the mentally and physically ill, for the next verse tells of "bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one." A method of caring for the sick, described in James 5:14-15, finally grew into the Roman Catholic sacrament of Extreme Unction. "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

One of the requirements of a bishop, according to I Timothy 3:2, is that he must be "given to hospitality." (See also Titus 1:8) In speaking of widows in the church, St. Paul gives the following guide as to good character: ". . . if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work" (I Tim. 5:10). Such women helped care for the sick, sometimes in exchange for aid received from the church. The deaconess movement, active and strong in many sections of the church, is a descendant of this early work of women in caring for the sick as well as showing hospitality to strangers. One scholar believes that there was a well-organized network of hospitality between churches at an early

date. "A 'saint,' i.e., a Christian, provided with a letter of recommendation from his church, could travel from one end of the Roman Empire to the other without having any anxiety about a home. Wherever there was a Christian church he was sure of receiving food and shelter, and attention in case of illness."[4] As the church became institutionalized and more complexly organized, it was inevitable that these roots of hospitality and charity should likewise take on institutional form in the care of the sick.

The transition from apostolic times to the later developments was one of formal structure and organization. As the church grew, problems of illness and charity became too great for individual attention. It took a special crisis to bring this need into the open, and the result was the establishment of a hospital. "Naturally it was travelers attacked by illness that called forth the greatest pity and anxiety. This was the origin of hospitals (*xenodochia, hospitia*), the first of which was founded in the last quarter of the fourth century, A. D., on account of a famine which had caused a deadly epidemic (Edessa in Syria in A. D. 370)."[5] The time was ripe for such organization of resources in caring for the sick; the crisis of an epidemic precipitated the action. There is considerable debate as to the establishment of the first hospital under Christian auspices. It is difficult to determine, partly because of the definition of terms. But as in many other aspects of its life, the church adapted already existing forms to serve its purposes. "The Grecian *xenodochion,* which was an asylum for travelers, gave its name to and served as a model for the early Christian institutions which were founded by St. Basil in Caesarea between A. D. 370 and 379."[6] Chrysostom established seven different hospitals about A. D. 400 which would be considered by modern church welfare agencies to be quite comprehensive in their coverage of human needs.[7] There was an inn for strangers and travelers, a hospital for the treatment of acute illness, another hospital for chronic patients, a home for orphans and a home for the aged, a home for the reception of the poor and another for all kinds of destitutes. It was a day in which the church felt conscious of its responsibility to all phases of life, a broad social concept of what it meant to be in need. It is just recently that we are recognizing the need to intensify work among chronic patients and in the field of geriatrics and gerontology.

During the Middle Ages numerous monastic orders and lay brotherhoods cared for the sick. Each had its own rule and approach, its own territory and organization. But the important fact remains that the church continued a large and active interest in the sick.

The responsibility for the administration of the hospitals which were heavily endowed by Charlemagne in the various parts of his domain became a matter of considerable importance to the church and in time was entrusted to the monastic orders. The care of the sick then be-

4 G. Bonet-Maury, "Hospitality (Christian)," in James Hastings, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,* VI, 804.

5 *Loc. cit.*

6 Lewinski-Corwin, *op. cit.,* p. 465.

7 *Op. cit.,* p. 805.

came for many centuries the exclusive prerogative of the monks and nuns, and lay physicians almost disappeared.[8]

In that cultural setting there was not so much competition for the privilege of doing welfare and health work as there is today. We must remember that in the Middle Ages there was one church, and that it existed in a feudal society. Today many churches work through community fund welfare relationships in a democratic society. Moreover, today the state has assumed many health and welfare functions which a thousand years ago would have seemed just as obviously the obligation of the church. Leaders and groups mobilized resources to meet special needs.

Brotherhoods and orders arose to serve in hospitals. One of the first of which we know began late in the ninth century in Siena. In the eleventh century many cathedrals and parish churches had hospitals. By the thirteenth century most of the hospitals were under bishops, but in charge of monasteries and of hospital orders. A large proportion, perhaps a majority of monasteries, seem to have had hospitals attached to them, several gave training in medicine, and many abbots became expert physicians.[9]

In the case of the famine in Edessa in the year 370, the crisis was met by establishing an institutional solution, a hospital. In the Middle Ages the big crisis was the crusades. These were a series of drawn out, migrant wars, leaving countless wounded along the way and spreading disease. It also meant that soldiers and pilgrims were now far from home, where friendly aid was not always guaranteed as it had been in their home province or country.

The crusades led to the establishment of military monastic fraternities, the most important of which was that of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem; this group built many hospitals along the line of communication between the West and the Holy Land.[10]

There were other orders, especially the famous Hospitalers:

The Brethren of Charity, begun in 1534, were for the care of the sick. Out of the work of John of Avila, known as the Apostle of Andalusia, came a community, the Hospitalers, also for the comfort of the sick.[11]

In the twelfth century, out of a hospital begun by a citizen of Montpellier, grew the Order of the Holy Ghost of Montpellier, which in time possessed many houses. Partly under the encouragement and regulation of churchmen, the study of medicine flourished at the University of Montpellier.[12]

Sometimes a hospital would be founded by an order, and in other cases a religious order would grow out of an unusually successful hospital program, so

8 Lewinski-Corwin, *op. cit.*, p. 465

9 Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, II (New York, 1938), p. 364.

10 Lewinski-Corwin, *op. cit.*, p. 465.

11 Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, III (1939), p. 19.

12 *Op. cit.*, II, p. 364.

that branch hospitals would be sponsored by the mother institution. There was no set pattern. The medieval period was one of more dynamic interaction than we sometimes think. Of course, there were many ways in which taboos of the church hindered the advance of medicine. Such was the objection to dissection of the human body for purposes of study, an objection based on theological grounds. But as is often the case, those faced with immediate and urgent human needs were often not so meticulous about theological niceties.

It is illuminating to notice that the spiritual care of patients in the Hôtel Dieu (a thirteenth century hospital in Paris) was quite complete and elaborate. Everything possible was done to maintain an active spiritual life in the patient.

> On entering the hospital, the patient, if a Christian, went to confession and received Holy Communion, in order that peace of mind might benefit bodily health. . . . According to their ability, the sick performed the duties of prayer, attendance at Mass, and reception of the sacraments. They were especially recommended to pray for their benefactors, for the authorities, and for all who might be in distress. At nightfall a sort of litany was recited in the wards, each verse of which began: "Seignors malades, proies por," etc. They were often cheered by the visits of persons of high station or of noble rank and charitable disposition, like Catherine of Sweden, Margaret, Queen of Scotland, Margaret, Duchess of Lorraine, King Louis IX of France.[13]

This was surely a complete program, including many items which are used today in hospitals. In many large hospitals regular religious services are now being introduced because their value is being re-discovered. The support and comfort of the sacraments may well be an aid to the recovery of patients and serve also to relate them to the larger community outside the hospital, where relatives and friends are also receiving Holy Communion, thereby helping to avoid the feeling of isolation and strangeness in hospitalization. The visits of royal dignitaries must also have had an inspirational effect in days when people accepted the doctrine of the divine right of kings. The prayers of the litany, participated in as a group, supplied a common bond of suffering and also provided intercession for others in distress. We could say that the administration of the Hôtel Dieu was conducted with some awareness of the spiritual needs of patients and provided extensive chaplaincy service.

Many changes came with the Reformation. Since the Reformation accompanied as well as caused a general upheaval in the structure of society, it naturally had some influence on the relationship of the church to the care of sick people in hospitals. New ideas about the relations of church and state and about the obligation and responsibility of the church to society made radical changes in the welfare and health work of the church, especially from the administrative and financial point of view. Basic principles of ownership and taxation were revised drastically. "After the Reformation, when the property of the monasteries was confiscated

13 James J. Walsh, "Religion and Health," in *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Charles G. Herbermann, et al., eds. (New York, 1910), VII, 486.

by the Protestant monarchs, the *spytals*, or hospitals, were closed, to the distress of the homeless and the crippled who had found asylum in them."[14]

This was not because the followers of Reformation principles disbelieved in hospitals, but because there was an inevitable cultural lag before new administrative responsibility and social patterns could be established. As a matter of fact, the Reformation stimulated new interest in critical thinking, research, and investigation, which served as a foundation for broader education and the encouragement of science. But time was needed to develop the full impact of this new-found freedom and to result in major medical advances which would show themselves in the hospital wards.

Economic changes accompanied religious change. Countless hordes now needed relief. Hospitals began to be catch-alls, where beggars as well as the sick would resort. Evidently the clear pattern of Chrysostom's division into seven branches of service was no longer in vogue. In St. Thomas' Hospital in Southwark, England, both curable and incurable people were served from 1552 to 1700. But its facilities were then so over-taxed that in 1700 it was specifically stated, "No incurables are to be received."[15] "The object of the restrictions was to prevent abuse of their facilities; otherwise they would have become almshouses rather than hospitals."[16] Municipalities began to take over responsibilities for hospital care in large cities as the need arose. The state was gradually taking over functions in education, health, and welfare which had formerly been the exclusive domain of the church.

Since the beginning of the present century the modern hospital has really come into its own with increased knowledge of bacteriology, aseptic surgery, and scientific chemotherapy. Hospitals vary from great teaching centers to custodial institutions. They are built and their policies are established by wealthy benefactors, church bodies, fraternal organizations, and the government (on city, county, state, and federal levels). To consider the modern hospital is to approach a complex social phenomenon.

> The essence of the hospital, what really counts, is the people in it. The patients are a group of persons with fears and sufferings come hither for relief. Around them is organized a larger group of persons to relieve them: doctors, nurses, technicians, chaplains, social workers, secretaries, clerks, engineers, dieticians, cooks, carpenters, and those who scrub. All are there to help the sufferers.[17]

The church and the hospital are two social institutions which have in common the fact that they both center their attention on persons in need. Since they both meet at this central purpose, it seems appropriate for the ministry of the chap-

14 Lewinski-Corwin, *op. cit.*, p. 465.

15 A. G. L. Ives, "Responsibility for the 'Chronic' Sick," in *Lancet*, 2 (Dec., 1946), p. 915.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 915.

17 Stanley Cobb, "Human Nature and the Understanding of Disease," in Faxon, ed., *The Hospital in Contemporary Life* (1949), p. 108.

lain to be included in the care of the patient in the hospital setting. We might say that a hospital is a sanctuary for persons in distress, physical and mental, which is too great to be borne alone.

> The interrelation of the Church and the hospital has been made evident: the Church's teachings required the development of the modern concept of the hospital. And lately we have seen how the Church has returned for direct service within the hospital, in our Institute of Pastoral Care. Priest, rabbi, clergyman, and doctor—the high calling of the one is no less than that of the other, the necessary spiritual depth of the one no less than that of the other.[18]

Physicians are appreciating more and more the valuable contribution the pastor can make in the care of the patient. Clergymen are learning to feel at home again in the institution they once founded, the hospital. There was a time when the hospital was a part of the church. Now the church is coming to the hospital and asking to be a part of the hospital program. This is a strange reversal. It is one of the reasons why the role of the chaplain is thought of as new by hospitals (and even sometimes by the church) even though in many ways it is very old.

MELANCHTHON'S PROPOSITIONS ON THE MASS

By Charles L. Hill

AS IS well known in Lutheran circles, a Melanchthon Jubilee was held in 1947 in honor of the 450th birthday of the *praeceptor Germaniae*. Various phases of Melanchthon's theological and literary activities were brought anew into contemporary focus. In 1948 a circle of theologians in Germany set for themselves the task of publishing a study edition of the most important works of the Reformer. Professor Friedrich Karl Schumann was the moving spirit in this new venture.

Scientific investigations into the history of the Reformation had accentuated the need for an improved and more useful edition of Melanchthon's works. The *Corpus Reformatorum* (bulky and often inaccessible), edited by Bretschneider and Bindseil in 28 volumes, had been the chief edition of Melanchthon's works. In 1897 the *Verein für Reformations-Geschichte* undertook to supply the works that were missing in *Corpus Reformatorum* by assembling, in five volumes, the so-called *Supplementa Melanchthoniana*. O. Clemen began to assemble the letters of Melanchthon in 1926 and completed the first volume, containing letters written between the years 1510-1528. His death precluded further work by him on this project. His first volume, however, had suggested an entirely new method of investigation into the works of Melanchthon.

For over a hundred years there has been a felt need for a good and useful edition of Melanchthon's works. This need has been supplied by a group of

18 Henry K. Beecher, "The Relief of Suffering," in Faxon, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

German scholars who have undertaken the publication of a five-volume edition. In 1951 and 1952 the first two volumes of this subject work appeared. According to the plan Volume I contains small theological writings, Volume II contains dogmatic works, Volume III will contain major exegetical works, Volume IV will contain major philosophical and historical works, and Volume V will be devoted to correspondence. Editors assigned for the successive volumes are Robert Stupperich, Hans Engelland, Gerhard Ebeling, Richard Nürnberger, and Hans Volz. There are copious notations and references in the two volumes so far published, and this change is in itself a distinct improvement over the *Corpus Reformatorum*. Moreover, the editors have made many changes in the Latin spelling, removing many obsolete and archaic forms and bringing the texts into conformity with classical Latin spelling.

Since the monumental work of Theodor Kolde, *Die Loci Communes Philipp Melanchthons in ihrer Urgestalt*, 1925, several very important works by outstanding scholars have appeared which indicate that German Lutheran scholarship is more and more coming to regard Melanchthon's contributions to the history of Protestant thought in a more favorable light.[1]

It is my intention here to translate one of the smaller but important works of Melanchthon on the mass. O. Clemen, a textual authority on the works of Melanchthon, places this work in the first half of November 1521. In the *Supplementa* these theses are contained in Volume VI. A German translation appeared

1 In order to gather these works in one place for convenience, I am here submitting them:
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Huebner, Fredrich, *Natürliche Theologie und theokratische Schwärmerei bei Melanchthon*, 1936.
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in 1525 under the title "Von der Mess, Propositiones." The following translation is made from the Latin text.

Propositions on the Mass, 1521

1. The Gospel hands down three things: the doctrine of faith, the doctrine of works, and the signs of promises or of the word of faith.
2. Faith is righteousness.
3. Works are the fruits of righteousness.
4. Signs are neither righteousness nor the fruits of righteousness.
5. Moreover, they are neither good works nor sacrifices that are offered to secure the remission of sins,
6. But they are the means by which we may be both reminded and assured of the word of faith.
7. There are two signs of the New Testament, that is, of grace promised: baptism and participation in the table of the Lord.
8. Signs are handed down for the purpose of reminding and assuring our heart of the will of God.
9. The use of signs is of the nature of putting a seal on letters.
10. To behold a painted cross is not a good work, but only a sign reminding us of Christ's death.
11. To behold the sun is not a good work, but only a sign reminding us of the Gospel or of Christ.
12. So participation in the table of the Lord is not a good work, but a sign reminding us of grace given to us through Christ.
13. But participation in the table of the Lord is different from the aspect of a painted cross or of the sun in this respect, that the sun and a painted cross are not signs instituted by God, by which it is signified that grace has been given unto me.
14. Signs that are instituted by men only remind, but the signs instituted by God, in addition to the thing of which they remind, also assure the heart of the will of God.
15. It is not that I approve of images, but for the sake of an example, this is to be said about images.
16. In this manner men think within themselves: "I would indeed freely believe in God if he should talk to me as he did to the fathers, and if he would likewise show to me signs of his good favor just as he showed them to the fathers. If he spoke to me directly some day, just as he did to Abraham, 'I will be thy protector,' or if he showed me some such sign as he did to him when he supplied a ram in the place of his son who was to be offered as a sacrifice."
17. In order to mitigate this distrust in the human heart, signs have been added to the Word, as would appear in all the stories of Scripture.
18. Gideon had many signs from which to select, that the Lord would not forsake his people who were about to wage war in Palestine. But Gideon was in doubt whether God wished the war to be waged by him.
19. Therefore he demanded a sure sign from God by which he would know for a certainty that the people were to be preserved at his hands and under his leadership.
20. In like manner there are many signs of grace for Christians, beyond question all of the miracles of Christ, but they have not been instituted for the purpose of signifying that grace pertains to us.
21. Therefore there is this one and only use of the mass, namely, to certify faith in the heart through it.

22. Indeed, how necessary and pleasant this use of a sign actually is, the spiritual easily understood.
23. For what more joyful thing can happen to the conscience than to receive a sure sign of the will of God?
24. Except the conscience be assured of the will of God, it is impossible for it to subsist.
25. Just as, for instance, the sight of a painted cross does not justify the beholder;
26. Just as acceptance of the sign of the fleece did not justify Gideon;
27. In the same manner the mass does not justify anyone.
28. Just as beholding a painted cross is not a work of such a nature as to make satisfaction either for our own sins, or for the sins of others,
29. And just as Gideon's acceptance of the sign of the fleece was not of such a nature as to make satisfaction for his own sins thereby,
30. So the mass is no sacrifice.
31. There is only one sacrifice, only one satisfaction of Christ, besides which there is none other.
32. The fleece signified success granted by God to Gideon.
33. In like manner participation in the table signifies the grace given to us in the Gospel.
34. Gideon offered up nothing in the fact that he accepted the fleece as a sign.
35. So we offer up nothing when we participate in the table of the Lord.
36. Therefore bread cannot be offered up in behalf of others.
37. Christ is the only oblation for our sins, and besides this there is no other.
38. The mortification of our old nature in Christ is a sacrifice and an oblation.
39. Likewise the mass is not of such a nature as to conclude that the more often it is repeated, the more it offers to God.
40. Just as each man is baptized for himself, so each man partakes at the table for himself.
41. He rightly partakes who uses it as a sign to confirm his faith.
42. He sins who partakes with the idea of offering up something unto God.
43. There is no further use of the mass except to remind one of grace promised, and to assure the heart of grace promised, or of the will of God.
44. Therefore without the Word masses are useless.
45. Indeed the Word is always incomparably greater than the sign.
46. One can be without the sign, but not without the Word.
47. Moreover if the Word is lacking, how do you know what is being signified?
48. The abuse of the mass ought to be abolished by the magistrates.
49. It should be done in the same manner in which Hezekiah destroyed the bronze serpent, or just as Josiah demolished the high places.
50. The abuses are that the mass is celebrated for others, for money, by compulsions, and by those ignorant of the Word and of faith.
51. But the abuse is the more abominable in that masses are celebrated by hypocrites for a satisfaction, for sin, for good works, and for a sacrifice.
52. The laity abuse the table of the Lord when by this work they believe that their sins are taken away, or that they make satisfaction for their sins.
53. For they ought to use it for a sign by which they might be admonished, first of the grace promised in the Gospel, then as a means by which they might be in the Gospel, and then as a means by which they might be assured of the benevolence of God toward them.
54. The mass is of no more value to the spectator than his beholding a picture.
55. It is to the advantage of the participant (one who eats it) if by it he is admonished and assured.

56. Because of their trifling abuse of masses Paul writes that the Corinthians had been wasted by a plague.
57. We ourselves, because of such abuse, undoubtedly are being punished by wars, by pestilence, and, what is more miserable, by blindness.
58. The more persistently one observes the abuse of masses, the more blindly one sins;
59. Especially so since the sin of public ignorance is the sin of each individual.
60. Thus far on participation in the table of the Lord: and now about prayers.
61. The prayers offered by priests in the mass are of no more efficacy than the prayer of a layman.
62. All of us are priests.
63. The priesthood is nothing more than the right to pray, or to importune God, or to make an offering unto God.
64. Let Thomas and Scotus, who are the originators of the abuse of the mass, be anathematized.
65. Let the bishops and the schools who do not oppose the impiety of masses be also anathematized.

THE FORMATION OF THE TENNESSEE SYNOD

By William E. Hall

ON JULY 17, 1820, in Solomon's Church, Greene County, Tennessee, two ordained pastors (Paul Henkel and his son, Philip Henkel), two licentiates (Jacob Zink and Adam Miller), and the Rev. David Henkel (in absentia)[1] met and organized the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod "in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, and polity of the Word of God, as set forth in the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church."[2] Of this organization Socrates Henkel wrote seventy years later: "It is true, efforts have been made to make it appear that personal difficulties were among the first causes which gave rise to the rupture. The facts will not justify such a conclusion. For these did not occur till after many of the conflicts in regard to differences in doctrine and practice had taken place and been agitated."[3]

This judgment of a descendant of the leaders of the Tennessee Synod requires some modification. It is unquestionably true that doctrine played a part in the rupture that occurred in 1819, but the underlying cause was personal difference between David Henkel and Gottlieb Shober.

That the cause of the split was not doctrine alone can be seen, in the first place, in the catechisms written by the Henkel family. A cursory study of these catechisms shows a marked difference in the theology of that family between the

1 There are several accounts of the men present at that meeting. Cf. Socrates Henkel, *History of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod* (New Market, Va.: Henkel and Co., 1890), p. 24, and F. Bente, *American Lutheranism* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1919), Vol. I, p. 148.

2 S. Henkel, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

year 1816, three years after the disagreement had begun, and the year 1851, a time when the family had become thoroughly confessional. The catchisms fall into two definite groups.[4] There are such slight differences within the first group that it can be seen that the catechisms are only different editions of the same work. Between the two groups, however, there is marked difference. The earlier group reflects a general Protestantism, and the second breathes the spirit of the confessional awakening in the nineteenth century. Up to the year 1816 the catechisms were entitled *The Christian Catechism,* while the edition of 1851 is entitled *Luther's Smaller Catechism.* The Reformed enumeration of the Commandments, dividing the first Commandment into two sections, emphasis on the word "Sabbath," the use of the words "Holy Catholic Church" in the Creed, and other things like these show Reformed influence in the editions up to 1816. In the later edition the traditional Lutheran division of the Commandments, the word "Sunday," the phrase "Holy Christian Church," the insertion of the section entitled "Of Confession," and other things show a definite change in theology. That this change came about in the family, and in David Henkel, after 1816 and before 1827 is supported by a manuscript study of the problem by David Henkel bearing the latter date.[5]

In the second place, it is revealing to notice the way in which the family acted toward other communions at different times. In 1803 both the Rev. Paul Henkel and Licentiate Philip Henkel joined with other ministers in the formation of the North Carolina Synod. Among these pastors was one, R. J. Miller, who was "a minister of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, under obligations always to obey the Rules, Ordinances, and Customs of that Society of Christians: as his ordination certificate will show. . . ."[6] In 1809 they could consent to the resolution, "Resolved, that every pastor shall be allowed to permit fellow-Christians of other regular religious confessions to come to the Holy Communion."[7] In the year 1810 Philip Henkel was present when all the pastors consented to the ordination of Gottlieb Shober, a Moravian, as a member of their synod. In the year 1817 Philip Henkel was one of the three men on a committee that approved

4 Belonging to the first group are *The Christian Catechism,* by Paul Henkel, 3rd ed. (New Market: Ambrose Henkel and Co., 1813), and *The Christian Catechism* by Paul Henkel, 5th ed., from the fourth enlarged edition (New Market: S. Henkel's Printing Office, 1816). Showing the later Lutheran emphasis was *The Christian Book of Concord* (Newmarket: Solomon D. Henkel and Brs., 1851). A note of interest is found in a penned note written in the German copy of the 1816 edition, located in the library of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia: "This edition—a large one—was suppressed on account of an error of orthodoxy." On the preceding page is a dedication dated 1909, probably written by Elon O. Henkel, a descendant of the family.

5 David Henkel, *Doct. Martin Luther's Smaller Catechism* (New Market: Solomon Henkel's Office, 1827). The manuscript copy can be found in the library of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

6 S. Henkel, *op. cit.,* p. 9.

7 *Minutes of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of North Carolina,* 1803-1826, translated from the German "Protocol" by P. W. E. Peschau (1893), p. 10.

the book *Luther,* written by Gottlieb Shober, and the Henkel family, including David, helped to circulate that book until the time of the split.[8] Only afterward did they discover that "whilst that work, compiled by Rev. G. Shober, approved by the North Carolina Synod, and familiarly called 'Luther,' conforms in some respects to sound Lutheran principles, its general tone and tenor are compromising and unionistic, with a tendency to latitudinarianism and looseness in doctrine, rather ignoring the true Confessions of the Church, and disparaging her distinctive features, with a view to effect a kind of general, fraternal union with the different denominations."[9] Finally, in the year 1820, these men found it necessary to make an open rupture with the North Carolina Synod "on account of differences in doctrine and practice."[10]

While doctrine and practice played some part in the split, the very gradual growth of confessional consciousness and of opposition to unionism, plus the fact that Paul Henkel at first wanted to have his son reproved for impudence,[11] suggest that we should look elsewhere, to personalities, for the underlying cause of the split.

Principally four men were involved: Paul Henkel; his two sons, Philip and David Henkel; and Gottlieb Shober. Dr. L. A. Fox, a member of the Tennessee Synod, wrote of Paul Henkel, "He was a man of untiring energy, indefatigable industry, earnest piety, and sound judgment. He inspired profound respect wherever he went. He was too active and too often on the road to be a close student, and he cannot be regarded as a great theologian. We must not read back into his writings the clear-cut conceptions of Lutheran theology that were afterwards developed in his family. He was the pupil rather than the teacher of his son, David Henkel, in Lutheran dogmatics. He had a strong Lutheran tendency rather than a decided, positive Lutheran creed. He raised no protest against the pseudo-relations of Miller and Shober to the church. He worked with them in full fraternal fellowship in the synod, and only after David Henkel had shown him did he realize the quasi-attitude he had maintained for nearly twenty years."[12]

The same Dr. Fox described Philip Henkel as "only a student of theology when he came, in 1801, to join his father. He was ordained in 1805. He was a man of good parts, but emotions and affections were the most prominent features of his character. He was a delightful preacher, swaying his audiences by a torrent of feeling. Governor Vance, when a boy, heard him and said years afterwards that he was the most eloquent man he ever heard. His strength was his weakness. He

8 G. D. Bernheim, *History of the German Settlements and of the Lutheran Church in North and South Carolina* (Philadelphia: The Lutheran Book Store, 1872), p. 435.

9 S. Henkel, *op. cit.,* p. 12.

10 *Ibid.,* p. 24.

11 Paul Henkel wrote to Shober in January, 1818: "You act quite right to cool hotheaded David as much as possible. He certainly has had severe reproof from me, and in such a manner that he does not write to me any more. . . ." L. A. Fox, *The Origin of the Tennessee Synod* (an address), 1920.

12 *The Lutheran Church Review,* Vol. XXXI (1912), pp. 662-663.

first introduced some of the revivalistic methods into our church, and at the synod of 1810 made a motion that 'a trial of three days' preaching be made, provided three Lutheran ministers be present, to which Moravian and German Reformed ministers may be welcomed.' "[13]

The historian of the North Carolina Synod, G. D. Bernheim, described the leader of the North Carolina side of the split, Gottlieb Shober, as "ordained when fifty-three years old, at the synod in 1810. He never severed his relation as lay member with the Moravian Church, and his grave may still be seen in the Moravian cemetery in Salem, N. C., in which only Moravians are buried. He died in 1838, having been a Lutheran preacher for twenty-eight years. From the time of his ordination he was a leading member of the synod, being elected secretary even before he was ordained, and very frequently afterwards. He was the spokesman of the Synod in all its public utterances and its first delegate to the General Synod. But he was so far from being a Lutheran that he could not understand Lutheran phraseology. He thought the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence in the Holy Supper was transubstantiation. He had little sympathy with dogmatics. He believed that religion was merely a sentiment. He wholly misunderstood David Henkel. In his efforts to loose the strange spirit, as he regarded it, that was creeping into the Synod and was about to destroy its piety, he fell into doubtful means. His influence during his long ministry was always against a distinctive Lutheranism and in favor of unionistic movements. Three years after his ordination the synod, through his influence, decided to ask 'for one or more Moravian ministers to supply the want of able laborers in the vineyard of the Lord entrusted to the synod.' After R. J. Miller was ordained by the Episcopal Bishop, the Episcopal convention speaks of a 'very interesting communication on the subject of union between that truly respectable denomination, the Lutherans, and our church.' A committee was appointed to negotiate with the synod. At the next meeting of the synod, 1828, Mr. Shober was made chairman to confer with it. The union was not effected, but it was agreed 'that it was expedient and desirable that the Lutheran Synod and the Protestant Episcopal Church of North Carolina should be united together in the closest bonds of fellowship.' Probably his relation to the Moravians and his sympathy with Zinzendorf's peculiar scheme made him hesitate about trying to take the Lutheran Synod bodily over into the Episcopal Church.

"In 1816 the Synod asked Mr. Shober, of such pronounced anti-Lutheran proclivities, 'to compile an abbreviated history of the rise, progress and present condition of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina, with the rules and discipline of the same in the said and neighboring states.' During the year he hastily threw together a hotch-potch of a book which he called 'Luther.' The sources were Milner's *Church History,* an abridged edition of Seckendorf, Buck's *Theological Dictionary,* Hume's *History of England,* and a *Life of Martin Luther* by F. W. Young. Such meager and foreign material he interlarded with pious reflections and exhortations.

13 *Ibid.,* p. 663.

In 1817 the manuscript was submitted to the Synod and was referred to a committee. . . . It was never rationalistic, but unionistic."[14]

Shober, Dr. Fox wrote, "was a man of decided opinions, unyielding in everything which he considered right, as may be seen from a sketch of his life in *The Evangelical Review,* Vol. VIII, pp. 412-414: 'With a mind that knew no dissimulation, a lofty independence, an ardent temper, and a character decidedly affirmative, he frequently experienced difficulties, and encountered points other than pleasant, in his pilgrimage through life, and which a disposition more pliant could have averted.' . . . But Rev. Shober was no Lutheran; he was a member of the Moravian Church, and never disconnected himself from communion with the same. He lived and died a member of that Church. This information the writer received from his own daughter, the widow of Bishop Herrman. . . . It may be readily perceived that no compromise could be expected on his part in the difficulties which distracted the Lutheran Church at that time."[15]

The same historian, Dr. Fox, writes that "David Henkel, the son of Rev. Paul Henkel, was born at Staunton, Va., in 1795. When he was five years old he was taken by his father with the family to North Carolina, and when eleven returned with them to New Market, Va. One of his older brothers, Solomon, was a rapidly rising physician, and another, Ambrose, was laying the foundation of a publishing house that afterward became noted in Lutheran circles. During this period David had white swelling,[16] from which he was ever afterwards lame. The schools of New Market were at the time very elementary. Perhaps his older brothers taught him the rudiments of Latin and Greek.[17] There is a tradition, but it is only a tradition, that he studied medicine, and went to North Carolina to begin its practice, but astonished his Virginia friends by beginning to preach.[18] He emerges from the obscurity of his early life when in 1812, at the age of seventeen, he preached his first sermon in South Carolina. He was privately given license by his brother Philip and two other ministers. It was irregular and was the cause of some friction when in 1813 he appeared at the synod asking for regular license."[19]

It was at this meeting of synod in 1813 that David Henkel and Gottlieb Shober became life-long enemies. Shober was prejudiced against David from that time on. Of what happened at that meeting we have no facts other than that Shober said that David committed some act of "indiscretion,"[20] but, knowing the men and their temperaments, we can well imagine that David, a brilliant youth of seventeen, pointed out, with little attention to the proper decorum, some errors that Shober had made. The venerable Mr. Shober, a highly respected citizen with a rather warm

14 G. D. Bernheim, *op. cit.,* pp. 441-442.

15 *The Lutheran Church Review,* Vol. XXXI (1912), pp. 665-666.

16 "Hydrarthus, a watery effusion in the joint cavities," according to Webster's Dictionary.

17 We know that he was familiar with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and German.

18 While he often distributed his brother's medicines, a document in the archives of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia seems to show the purpose of his trip as that of getting pre-printing book subscriptions.

19 *The Lutheran Church Review,* Vol. XXXI (1912), pp. 669, 670.

20 L. A. Fox, *op. cit.,* p. 2.

temper, did not like the correction. Though David was probably right in what he said, he was unwise in the way that he said it.

David Henkel was regularly licensed at the meeting, but a rule was passed that "hereafter no one receive full ministerial authority except alone by the Synod, and that after examination. . . ."[21] The next year Shober held him back from ordination by having a resolution passed, "Resolved: that hereafter no uneducated person shall receive license to preach until he has studied with one of our pastors and is twenty-one years of age.[22] The following year Shober did not attend synod, and David was advanced to the status of candidate.[23] Because of this, the synod spent a great amount of time in 1816 defining the grades of ministry. It was decided that, following the practice of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, the grades of the ministry would be: "I. Cathechists who are still pursuing a course of study, and in addition to that at the same time are preaching, baptizing, and catechising, are under the supervision of the ministerium and of one ordained minister. II. Candidates who perform all ministerial acts are limited to certain congregations. III. Ordained deacons are those who differ from candidates only in ordination, but otherwise have no greater rights or privileges. IV. Pastors are those who have for three years enjoyed systematic instruction under an ordained minister and who have studied the languages somewhat."[24] Even with all this strict definition we can see that someone, presumably Shober, was making a special case of David and holding him back, for, while he was only licensed as a candidate, he was given "full power to administer the sacraments in all our churches."[25]

In 1817 David Henkel was sent to visit a mission point in Cape Girardeau, Mo., to get him out of the way for a while.[26] There was no meeting the following year, but in 1819 there were two meetings. The first meeting was held a little earlier than had previously been decided so that a delegate might be elected and sent to the organization meeting of the General Synod, and none of the Henkels was present save David. Serious charges, which were unfounded, were brought against him, and he was reduced in status to catechist. It was charged that he had wrongfully excommunicated a certain Andrew Hoyle, Esq., "that he taught the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, that he had the right to forgive sins, . . . and still other grave violations (*Verbrechen*) proven against him, which, however, for the sake of peace were not to be put in the protocol (minutes)."[27]

Some weeks later, at the time previously decided upon, the Henkels and some few others met and ordained David and a certain Joseph E. Bell. This ordination took place under an oak tree; the president of synod would not let them use the church for business, because he said that the business had already been taken care

21 *Minutes*, p. 19.
22 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
23 *Ibid.*, p. 25.
24 *Ibid.*, p. 28.
25 *Ibid.*, p. 28.
26 *Ibid.*, p. 33.
27 *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

of at the earlier meeting.[28] Later Bell returned to the North Carolina Synod and his ordination was recognized.[29]

On May 20, 1820, the Synod of North Carolina met again for its annual meeting. "The validity of David Henkel's ordination was denied. Henkel proposed to be tried by the Confessions of the Lutheran Church and the Constitution of Synod, and if found wrong he would submit. On the other hand, he demanded that the actions of Shober and others be tried by the same rule. This Shober refused and demanded the submission of Henkel to the decision of the majority. The discussion was long and heated. It covered a number of important doctrines. . . . While the discussion was yet in progress Shober exclaimed, 'Whoever is a right Lutheran let him follow us out to John Harry's Hotel.' 'There we will begin our Synod.' David Henkel and his party remained in the church, planned to meet in Tennessee in July for the organization of a new synod, and then adjourned."[30]

There can be no doubt that personal friction, and differences based thereon, led to the formation of the Tennessee Synod.

NOR ANY THANKS HAVE FOR IT

By Walter G. Tillmanns

MANY Lutheran hymns, including the hymns written by Martin Luther, have survived in their American environment solely on the strength of their musical settings. If their survival had depended on the words which we read in our hymnals, I am afraid that they would have been forgotten long ago, and rightly so.

In Europe a child easily learns thirty to forty hymns during his first fourteen years and remembers most of them throughout his adult life. The heritage of the Lutheran hymn is one of the strongest pillars of present-day church life on the Continent. For example, practically every one knows *Ein feste Burg,* all four stanzas, and *Vom Himmel hoch,* at least six or seven stanzas, without consulting a hymnal. In North America we rarely find the genius who knows even one stanza of these hymns by heart. There is only one "Luther" hymn which most children and adults in our churches can sing without hymnal, the so-called "Luther's Cradle Hymn" (*Away in the Manger*). Unfortunately, this hymn is not by Luther. Other Lutheran hymns we simply cannot sing unless we have a hymnal before our eyes.

In these days when we anticipate the publication of a new hymnal we are keenly aware of this sad state of affairs. There are a number of reasons for it.

28 *Ibid.,* pp. 39-40.

29 *The Lutheran Church Review,* Vol. XXXI (1912), p. 674: "When Henkel pressed the fact that the Synod recognized the ordination of Bell, who was ordained at the same time and under the same conditions, and therefore was compelled to recognize his own, Shober made no direct reply."

30 B. D. Wessinger, *The Work of the Pioneers of the Tennessee Synod* (an address), 1920, p. 115.

but I feel that the two most important reasons could be remedied. They are poor translation and faulty interpretation.

Speaking of atrocious translations, a Lutheran college professor stated some time ago, that the rendering into English of Luther's beautiful and simple Christmas hymn *Vom Himmel hoch* is especially bad. What child or adult in America, he asked, would say *From heav'n above to earth I come?* Bayard Taylor, professor of German at Cornell University, who claimed to be the first to have translated this hymn into English in 1879, renders the first two lines as follows:

> From Heaven I come, a herald true,
> To bring glad tidings down to you.[1]

How much better is this than the "composite translation" which we find in our hymnals today!

The second reason weighs more heavily upon my heart. Faulty interpretation of the original is one of the greatest weaknesses of our Lutheran translators in spite of Luther's treatise "On Translating"[2] which all of us should study again and again.

Luther's hymn *Ein feste Burg* has been translated into 178 languages.[3] It is the most translated hymn of all Christendom. In the English language we have at least twenty-seven versions of it. The most famous and the most inaccurate version of this hymn was written by Thomas Carlyle in the nineteenth century.[4] The most recent translation is by Dr. W. O. Doescher of Capital University.[5] In our Lutheran hymnals we usually find the translation which hides under the *nom de plume* "Composite." Another favorite translation found in many hymnals was made by Paul E. Kretzmann. Comparing these versions we find so many variants that a person who does not know the original must necessarily doubt whether there is any approximately "correct" translation of the Battle Hymn of the Reformation. Poetic license may be the excuse for some of these discrepancies, but on the whole there is no justification whatever for the radical changes from the original.

Let us take a look at the second line of the last stanza. Kretzmann realized that the translation of Composite does not make sense, as most of us will readily agree:

> The Word of God they shall let stand,
> *Nor any thanks have for it.*

He renders it, *They cannot work their pleasure*. Luther's use of the word *danck* in the line *und kein danck dazu haben* had nothing at all to do with *thanks*. Etymological dictionaries state clearly that in Luther's day the word *danck* or

1 Bayard Taylor, *Studies in German Literature* (New York, 1881), p. 156.
2 *Works of Martin Luther,* Philadelphia ed., V, pp. 10-27.
3 *Christenlehre, Zeitschrift für das katechetische Amt* (Berlin, Dec., 1952), p. 335.
4 Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 154 f.
5 *The Christian Century,* Oct. 21, 1953, p. 1197.

danc meant primarily *thought, thinking.*[6] Thus the correct translation would read, *And add no thoughts to it.* This would be in agreement with Scripture, e.g., Rev. 22, 18. It was probably the interpretation which most Lutherans adopted in the centuries following the Reformation. However, philologists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have pointed out that the early New High German *kein danck,* which even today is used in the form *ohne Dank,* is idiomatic for *doing something unwillingly.*[7] Professor Walter Naumann of the University of Wisconsin, in a recent edition of Luther's Battle Hymn, translates this line *and that against their will.*[8] It can be safely assumed that Luther was thinking of this idiomatic use when he wrote the line. Kretzmann comes closest when he translates: *They cannot work their pleasure,* but a more forceful and more idiomatic rendition should be found. In any case, the words *nor any thanks have for it* are not only meaningless, but convey, if anything, the exact opposite of what Luther wanted to say.

There are other passages in this hymn upon which we may touch briefly. Take, for example, the third line of the first stanza: *Er hilfft uns frey aus aller not.* Composite, in translating *He is our help in every need,* leaves out the most important word in the sentence, *frey.* Kretzmann translates very freely, *He frees us with his trusty sword,* Carlyle *He'll help us clear from all the ill,* while Doescher renders the line *He foils the cruel oppressor's rod.* Naumann suggests that the word *frey* is used adverbially, thus giving this line a much stronger meaning: *He helps us freely from every need.* I am inclined to think that Luther wanted to state here his belief in free salvation.

Another example: In the last line of the second stanza Composite translates literally *He holds the field forever.* I am afraid that this line does not mean much, if anything, to the average American. *Das felt behalten* means clearly *to win the victory.*[9] Kretzmann translates *In ev'ry strife to conquer,* Carlyle *Shall conquer in the battle,* while Doescher brings out the thought of victory and at the same time retains the word *field* when he writes *He holds the field victorious.* By the way, Luther uses the idiom *das felt behalten* in Eph. 6, 13 which the K. J. V. and the R. S. V. render (and having done all,) *to stand.*

In the third stanza, line two, Composite translates *All watching to devour us.* Carlyle has the same. The use of the word *watching* in this connection is archaic. What Luther meant was *all eager to devour us* (Kretzmann), or *all threatening to devour us* (Doescher).

In the third line of the same stanza the words *we fear no ill* are an overstatement which even a courageous Christian like Luther would not make. Christians do fear "ill!" A substitute for the word *ill* should be found. It is misunderstood. There is also no justification for translating the next line *They cannot overpower us.* Luther wrote: *So fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr, es soll uns doch*

6 Grimm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig, 1860), II, cols. 727-733.
Heyne, *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Leipzig, 1905), I, p. 540 f.
7 Heyne, *op. cit.,* quotes this line by Luther.
8 Walter Naumann, *First Readings in German Masterpieces* (Boston, 1951), p. 194.
9 Naumann, *op. cit.,* p. 192.

gelingen. The meaning seems to be clear, *We are not much afraid that we would not succeed.* The whole emphasis is on the action by the weak, but strengthened, Christian believer and not on the overpowering force of the hosts of devils.

In the same stanza, line six, *Scowl fierce* (Composite) should be corrected to *fiercely* (Kretzmann). But again the word *scowl* does not convey the true meaning. The devil is not merely a scowling bystander. Naumann suggests *however grimly he behaves.* Doescher translates: *Let this world's prince then rage,* which probably conveys most closely Luther's thought.

The fourth stanza offers a number of difficulties besides the second line which we have discussed above. For example, the third line, *Er ist bey uns wol auf dem plan,* has been translated *Here Christ Himself leads the command* (Composite), *For God Himself fights by our side* (Doescher), while Carlyle (*But spite of hell shall have its course*) and Kretzmann (*The Spirit, with His gifts so pure, we have in fullest measure*) do not even try to render Luther's words into English, but let their phantasy roam "in fullest measure." An older Composite translation had the words *He's by our side upon the plain.*[10] This is probably to best rendition, although in modern American speech the word *plain* is no longer understood to mean *battlefield.* Luther means to say: *He is with us on the field of battle.*[11]

As a final example let us look at the seventh line of the fourth stanza. Luther writes: *Lass fahren dahin!* Composite (*When they their worst have done*) and Kretzmann (*Their hatred still is vain*) do not translate this line at all. Carlyle (*These things shall vanish all*) and Doescher (*Though all things pass away*) interpret the passage quite literally. But Naumann suggests that *Lass fahren dahin!* just means *Do not regret!* In this sense the idiom is still used in modern German.

The above remarks have been offered in the spirit of helpfulness, not in a spirit of depreciation. They do not exhaust all that can be said about hymn translating, not even about the interpretation of this most famous hymn of Luther. They deal with English usage only incidentally. But it is hoped that future translators and interpreters of our treasure of hymns will not only use good American speech, but also the philological tools which are available and are necessary for correct translation and interpretation.

A DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

By Wilfried Tappert

DURING his recent visit to the United States Dr. Vilmos Vajta, executive secretary of the new Department of Theology of the Lutheran World Federation, suggested that the experience of the church in particular countries might indicate the theological questions in which the portion of the church in those countries

10 O. Hartwig, ed., *Wartburg Hymnal* (Chicago, 1918).
11 Naumann, *op. cit.*, p. 194. See also Grimm, *op. cit.*, VII, col. 1883 (3a).

might be especially interested.[1] He pointed out that with the great emphasis on stewardship in this country, it seemed emphatically the task of Americans to work out the theological basis of this manifestation of Christian life.

This suggestion may have caused some of our stewardship leaders to ask, "What else have we been doing?" Surely the church recognizes stewardship as an indispensable part of the Christian life, in many respects its essence. Yet much that has been said and written about stewardship is unsound theology. There has been a deplorable tendency to deem it sufficient to pick texts at random from various portions of the Bible and tie them together loosely in what may pass for a doctrine of stewardship.

Every clear doctrine must have a definition which briefly indicates its subject matter and limits its scope. Many definitions of stewardship have been offered. The most popular may be that of Walton H. Greever, who speaks of stewardship as "the living of the Christian life." This is a practical definition, but it is so all-embracing that it ceases to be definitive. It is not meant to be a theological definition. Again we have heard of stewardship as "the ready and willing use of man's gifts, time, and energy in the service of God." This is more of an explanation than a definition. Other attempts at defining stewardship speak of it as "the transforming of base, lifeless material into spiritual realities through Christian living," or as "giving further that which God has first given to us." The term "stewardship" is rather recent in church language, and so it is not defined in our sense in the older dictionaries and encyclopedias. As a tentative basis for the formulation of a Christian doctrine of stewardship, the following definition is suggested: *Christian stewardship is the response of the believer to redemption.* Here a few points need clarification.

The definition refers to *Christian* stewardship in recognition of the fact that there is, or at least may be, a responsibility of stewardship which is not essentially Christian. Jesus seemed to be referring to such a stewardship when, even though addressing his disciples, he said (Luke 17:10), "So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say: 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.'" Many arguments which have been advanced for stewardship are not based on Christian premises and therefore fall short of establishing a Christian doctrine of stewardship.

The term *believer* also has the purpose of excluding as well as including. A Christian doctrine of stewardship must concern itself with Christians. Most Christian doctrines are positive where the church and its true members are concerned, and negative where the world or non-Christians are concerned. The church teaches those who are in its fold and those whom it seeks to draw into its fold. From the duties and responsibilities which belong to believers in Christ the church may draw further observations concerning similar obligations inherent in the very nature of man and therefore common to all men. "Therefore thou art without excuse, O man." The church does not, however, use the reverse process of accept-

1 Cf. Vilmos Vajta, "Theology and World Lutheranism," in THE LUTHERAN QUARTERLY, Nov., 1953.

ing the conclusions of mankind in general and drawing from them specific conclusions for the Christian. Christian stewardship concerns itself with the person who through faith in Christ has found salvation, and with the unbeliever and outsider only in a secondary way, if at all. A doctrine of stewardship, therefore, which is applicable to all men alike, whether Christian or not, is not essentially a Christian doctrine.

The word *response* embraces the whole Christian life as a fruit of redemption. It does not limit stewardship to the area of systematic benevolence in the church, or to church support, but concerns itself with the basis for all Christian service, ministry, and self-dedication. The term also helps in a manner to place the doctrine concerning stewardship in a systematic presentation of the faith. For response on the part of man to the overture of God is limited in traditional Lutheran theology to the realm of sanctification.

The study of man's reaction to his own redemption by God in Christ is generally relegated to the sphere of ethics. Yet stewardship as such is rarely treated under ethics. In any case, the basis for a doctrine of stewardship must be laid in the realm of, and by use of the tools of, dogmatics itself. The situation here is rather involved. The hunger of the church for some definition of the part that man plays in fulfilling the purpose of God in redemption brought about the rise of Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism, and Synergism. The Roman doctrine of "faith energized by love" stems from a similar desire. In defense of the doctrine of *sola gratia* our theologians were forced of necessity to discuss "good works" in connection with the doctrine of justification. Thus the great emphasis which the Epistles and Gospels, and also the Lutheran Confessions, place on the Christian life, the working of the works of God, the fruits of faith, the new obedience, and the like has found only parenthetical treatment here and there in our formal teaching. As a consequence we have fallen under the criticism, amply supported by the indifferent church life in many countries, that what a man is, how he lives, and what he does makes little difference so long as he has faith in the abstract, so long as the teaching of the Word of God is pure, apart from any concrete testimony to this faith and truth in Christian life.

The word *redemption* in the definition refers to the fact that the believer is a redeemed child of God—not a servant or a slave, but a child of and heir to God's promises in Christ Jesus. It points to the motivating cause behind the true practice of Christian stewardship in all its width and breadth: the love and mercy of God tasted in redemption, the joy of being redeemed, the thankfulness of the heart for God's redemption. Stewardship is thus not a natural relationship between sinful man and the holy God. It is not a natural reaction of man to the goodness of the Lord experienced in divine providence. It is not a cause of or help toward man's salvation. It is not a service or an obligation which the Christian may undertake or neglect at will. It is rather that abundant life which Jesus came to bring to his own, without which as a fruit we are not redeemed, we are not the Lord's. The word "redemption" must here be thought of also as including the Christian's personal relation to God. My stewardship is my life and conversation, what I am and what

I do because I have been redeemed by God who loved me and for me gave his only begotten Son, by Christ who shed his blood for my sins, by the Holy Ghost who called me through the Gospel and engendered in me saving faith. My stewardship is not the result of my generosity, softheartedness, pity, or innate goodness, but it is simply my walking with God, my living in Christ, my being filled with the Holy Spirit. And these things are possible only to him who has been redeemed.

WISDOM DOCTRINES IN OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE

By G. R. Webber

THE Hebrew writers whom we know in Old Testament literature were born under the star of idealism. When the word of the Lord came to Abram in Ur he asked for no credentials and verifications. Jacob wrestled through a night of darkness with a mysterious being who before dawn left him the name Israel and disappeared. Jacob resolved that God had visited him. In another instance "there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel" and Jereboam believed it so.

A racial relative of the Hebrews, the Chaldeans, developed their endowments in an Aristotelian direction. Before Abram's time their wise men calculated in what position in the heavens Thuban of Draco would be found six centuries later with accurate results. The Hebrew followed the ancient belief that God communicated with man, speaking in dreams and visions, and to his holy men in revelation. The more to support their faith they had the covenant, deliverance from Egypt, the return to Canaan, the Torah, the Pentateuch. A simple folk-creed and historic fact developed gradually as revelation was added to revelation until in the fulness of time God sent the Word to earth in all the fulness of the Godhead.

The nature of the early foundations of Hebrew faith determined for all time the Scriptural attitude toward wisdom. The Hebrew language had no elaborate set of words for a scientific understanding of cosmology and ethic apart from religion. Wisdom might mean the science of the wise men, or sagacity of rulers and the craft of sorcerers, the skills of artisans, learning in the law, dimension of understanding, the omniscience of God in creation and administration. There were no doubt wise men among the Hebrews who made such observations from experience as "like mother like daughter" and some of these appear in the Scriptures. It is thought that these wise men were a permanent caste among the Hebrews and are once mentioned in Isaiah along with prophets and priests.

The Hebrew equivalent for *magus* is found but once, in Jeremiah 39:3, 13, where Rab Meg is mentioned. Among the Persians the Magi were a religious caste, among the Medes they were mainly interpreters of dreams. Joseph was able to interpret Pharoah's dream of the lean and fat cattle where others had failed and Daniel could interpret the handwriting on the wall when Nebuchadnezzar's brain

trust were mute. In secular experience the Magi were at times a power in society and at other times a reproach. The Magi of the Medes are said to have been dominant under Cyrus and again under the Sassanidae. In other times they were in disrepute, as is suggested by a reference to them in the *Oedipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles (387), and again in the Empire. Obadiah (9) and Jeremiah (49:7) imply that Teman had been famous for its wise men, which accounts partly for the prestige of the book of Job. In a vision Isaiah (29:14) heard God say that the Hebrews of his times had turned from him to their wise men.

Israel had her first generally recognized savant near the beginning of the last millenium. Solomon is celebrated in 1 Kings 3 and 4 as the author of some 3,000 proverbs and composer of 1,000 songs, as an authority on statecraft and natural sciences. Jesus referred to the wisdom of Solomon. It appears probable that in Solomon's golden age prophecy's voice was little heard and taking the prophet's place were Israel's wise men. Solomon is traditionally known as the author of the book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, which with Job and perhaps several of the Psalms, make up the collection called "wisdom literature."

In the golden age the wise men were the educators. They were teachers of morals. In times past Israel's great leaders had spoken to the nation corporately. Hear O Israel, our God is one. The educators addressed themselves to individuals. Being laymen they may have thought that an appeal to the heart was not enough, the whole being should respond. For the whole response the individual must perceive moral duty abstractly through conceptual thinking. In wisdom literature the lay reader misses the evangelical zeal of David's hymns, his affection for Zion, his devotional culture. Wisdom literature does not read like a hymn of Frances Havergal but it is not scholasticism. Before the exile in Babylonia Israel's wisdom men were of orthodox faith and in no manner subjected God's revelation to the test of science.

The three wisdom books mentioned have wisdom tenets in common. We might give the first mention to "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." It occurs at the close of Ecclesiastes, at the close of Job's Hymn to Wisdom (ch. 28), at the beginning and near the close of the Hymn to Wisdom in Proverbs, and in Psalm 111:10. The full impact of the saying is felt after one becomes more familiar with the wisdom writers. The writers believed that a man was able of his own resources to lead a godly life, but only a mind with awe toward God invited wisdom. World religions had despaired of knowing God. Devout Hebrews, including the writers of the wisdom books, believed that God might be known by obedience, penitence, and wisdom.

Another doctrine characteristic of the school was the remedial nature of suffering. The savants of other peoples had sought for a solution of evil and found none. The Greek thinkers of the Eighth Century B. C., the first to offer a formal and independent philosophy, are said to have broken with religion because leaders had failed to solve the problem of evil. Knowing God and solving the perennial problem of evil were two of the most important problems of early thought. Ecclesiastes is especially heavy in pessimism and is quoted by no Scriptural

author. Solomon had apparently listened to the pessimism of savants of other nations than his own. The doctrine was not original with the wisdom school. It was first stated in Deuteronomy 8:5. As a father chastens the son whom he loves so does God chasten those who are his. With the characteristic words "chasten" and "love" the saying is found in Proverbs, Job, Hebrews 12:5 and Revelation 3:19.

Another doctrine not original but a favorite among wise men was God's wrath upon the wicked. Psalm 73 is thought of by some as a wisdom song because its author Asaph treats the theme throughout.

A new light on righteousness is cast by the wisdom books. The law had been given to the Israelite as the warrant of a chief officer. Rewards are promised for obedience, such as wealth, a good name, many descendants, length of life. The wisdom books have a yet higher motivation, the wisdom of electing the highest good. Righteousness in itself is reward enough.

Proverbs and Job celebrate the eternal quality and personality of divine wisdom, and several of the Psalms. God's wisdom and human wisdom are not one and the same. Job especially separates them by an impassable gulf in his hymn to wisdom in chapter 28. Elihu makes a distinction between the two but raises the hope that a human may by proper qualification be host to the visitation of divine wisdom. The Voice in the tempest testified that wisdom was present with God at creation.

"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the world was. . . . Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him" (Proverbs 8:22, 23, 30).

Some commentators have thought that Psalm 104 belongs to wisdom literature. "Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire: who laid the foundations of the earth" (4). Speaking later of the seas, their ships, and leviathan, "thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth" (26-30). Contemporary translators whose exegesis we trust more than that of non-linguistic scholarship, render both those texts in no manner that suggests creating-intermediaries. In a poetic form of expression the psalmist says that winds are the messengers of their God, fire and flames his servants, and the life within the deep is generated and kept ever young by his command.

Proverbs cannot reconcile piety with poverty, or an inert mind, or with the sluggard. There is no such thing as a righteous ne'er-do-well. Levity, pride, slander, flaring temper are not the marks of a God-fearing man. Wisdom writers are outspoken on such matters for the reason that they are dominated by a passion to see the Torah in action. It was nothing new that a God-fearing man was expected to be well informed. In earliest times the prophets were men who "knew the knowledge of the Most High" (Numbers 24:16).

Ecclesiastes is supposed by not a few scholars to have been written in the times of Judaism. The supposition is based on the author's complaint of bad government, of which Solomon the king would hardly accuse himself. This point would carry validity if so much of the book did not reflect the disillusionment of the king

who forsook his father's advice and followed pleasure, erudition, and the vainglory of empire.

The world of literature has all but required the book of Job from us on forfeit. Tennyson, Carlyle, Kant have praised it to the skies. Kant liked the theodicy, philosophers liked the archaic grappling with the problem of evil, others were fond of the hymns to wisdom and creation. One commentator went so far as to assert that Isaiah borrowed liberally from it.

A refrain running through the colloquies in the book of Job is his proclamation of his righteousness. He is deeply hurt that God will not acknowledge his perfection. His insistence on his perfection is largely due to the accusations of the three visitors. A saying for which he is universally known, "I know that my Vindicator lives" seems to mean that he believes that his Champion will stand before God and vouch for his perfection, in which case he will be called before God personally to be commended.

The three "wretched commiserators" are in no good repute with either their author or with commentators. The king of Uz, in bitter pain and a reproach to the many who once admired him, should not have been censured so severely. They charge him with secret sins and in the last speech to Eliphaz he is accused of the sin which Homer called *hybris,* the sin of those who are too well off and so hold God in contempt. Eliphaz represents the famed wisdom of Teman, Zophar and Bildad speak for the wisdom of sister kingdoms. They bear down on the utter vileness of man. Zophar reiterates that God is unknowable. Eliphaz insists that human pleasure is no issue with God. Job counters their wisdom with what the Voice calls verbosity without meaning. The aim of the author may be that of demonstrating the futility of human wisdom.

Job repents in dust and ashes after the Voice has testified to the omnipotence and omniscience of God, giving divine wisdom a high transcendence. In his hymn to wisdom (ch. 28) Job had acknowledged that human wisdom might not match the divine. For the book as a whole the chief motif is Job's staunch loyalty to God. His resoluteness does not miss far Habbakuk's historic 2:4.

The world of biblical scholarship is not agreed on the influence which the wisdom books may have had on subsequent Scriptures. When the latter are resumed a century or so later we find Amos, Hosea, Micah and their circle too preoccupied in the gathering storms of revolution to hymn paeans to wisdom. Instead of encomiums to wisdom Isaiah pens an eloquent hymn to the Branch of Jesse. "And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom, and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord . . . the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (11:2, 9).

Jeremiah states the same conservative article of faith in wisdom (10:12; 51:15), the tenet that God in wisdom created the world. Our inspired authors following the wisdom period of Solomon might not object to the sentiment that divine wisdom was a personality but none of them makes that statement.

In Galilee Jesus would not encounter a great many of the intelligentsia but

he found them in abundance elsewhere. On one occasion he thanked God that his doctrine could not become the property of the wise (Luke 10:21). His apostles and Paul were in constant conflict with them, as with Simon, the *magus*, or self-appointed *logos* (Acts 8).

Luke (11:49) and Paul (1 Cor. 1:24) speak of the Christ as "the wisdom of God." Apparently both apostles had first-hand experience with missionaries of a growing Gnosticism, converts would confuse the Christ with the Greek *logos*. Paul must explain that Jesus was no world-mind or intermediary and must emphasize his prophetic mission. He is presented as the wisdom of God. In Asia Minor Paul was confronted by Mesopotamian and Babylonian Jews who were infected by rabbinical theosophy and the angelology of the Kabbala. The first chapters of Colossians refute the heresies of such Jews who worked among the converts in the new congregation at Colossae, and state the Christian truth, from which is taken the Epistle for Trinity 24. The first chapter of Colossians and the first chapter of Hebrews bear more than an incidental resemblance, and both are indebted to Psalm 104.

Each chapter states that Jesus had a part in creation. The same statement is made in 1 Cor. 8:6 and possibly in Eph. 3:9. These are the statements cited by critics who allege that Paul and John were tinged with Gnosticism. If we follow the demiurge tenet of Zoroaster and Plato carefully the resemblance to Paul and John is not plain. Zoroaster had an intermediary who was famous for his knowledge. Plato's demiurge was a kind of glorified contractor who followed the blueprint of his superior, Idea.

A key to the timeless battle is found in the Johannine prologue near the close (8), "no man hath seen God at any time." The Son who came from him has revealed him to man and by *pistis*, and not by *gnosis*, do they become sons. The brevity of the prologue has impressed the most profound among scholars.

Dr. Luther gave considerable study to the apocryphal books of the Old Testament and included them in his Bible of 1534 on the ground that they are valuable as source reading. Not only do the wisdom books of that collection give information on Jewish thought after the exile but they trace the history of wisdom back into remote antiquity. Perhaps even more valuable is the contrast they afford to the canonical books of wisdom.

For sweep and rhetorical grandeur the peer among wisdom books of the apocrypha is the Wisdom of Solomon, the author of which one can hardly confuse with the king of former times. Parts of the work are true to canonical traditions but on the whole it is too grandiose, ambitious, and heretical to be acceptable in our canon. The author purports to do battle with the popular trend toward highbrowism and yet himself falls a victim, his 1:3, 4 suggesting a line from the Stoic Cleanthes' Hymn To The Most High:

> neither hearing hear
> God's universal law, which those revere
> By wisdom guided, who happiness find.

Jesus, son of Sirach, had some little orthodoxy in his allusions to the rites and observances of canonical doctrines. Notwithstanding he is plainly a dualist in the matter of wisdom. Canonical wisdom authors did not separate wisdom from God, but the apocryphal writers both set it apart and gave it a mighty reverence. Sirach is commonly thought of as a transition from canonical to apocryphal wisdom.

In tracing the development of wisdom from remote times each author named gives considerable eminence to the divine Enoch of Genesis. A secular tradition celebrates Enoch as an intellectual of first magnitude and it is this tradition that appears to be followed by Solomon and Sirach. The Book of Enoch made its appearance in the times of late Judaism but failed to gain admission to the apocrypha. It presents a kind of Minerva saga, following a classic myth, the goddess visiting an apathetic earth and returning to her empyrean. Luther complained that this book was read in his times.

Even so sketchy a study of wisdom as we have made serves to suggest that from the beginning of religious thought there have always been those who believed that God informs men on matters of life and death importance, that man has always sought to find the same information by himself. The controversy has had no little influence on religious thought. Throughout the history of our revelation its guardians have ever been in conflict with their opponents. Because of this circumstance our writers have not been at liberty to speak freely of the values of man's thinking. Our Scriptures nowhere encourage an ignorant laity and know-nothing clergy. Our Church has always regarded the reading and preaching of the Word as the *culmen* in the transfiguration experience of the chief service. The Christ is no Krishna, to worship whom is life.

The activist king of Israel and his disciples did not worship wisdom for its own sake. A perfect and upright life was the objective. That ideal was given the form which we might expect from educators, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace" (Psalm 37:37). The educator is not satisfied with telling you in decorous recitation the beauty of a righteousness but goes to the grass roots method of attaining perfection.

Nor may we resolve that the approach of wisdom literature is altogether intellectual. The word "wisdom" conveys the valid impression of a heart oriented to a revealed highest good. Assuming that the fountain is good there remains the necessity of expert and dimensional insight. Proverbs presents a catalogue of life's situations and tells the right choice and course of action. Presentation is the fine art of the pedagogical craft.

Luther was happy when sixteenth century thought emerged from the long chill of an Aristotelian winter to the warm springtime of Plato's heart. Neither man was his ideal but he knew both quite well and he remarked that individuals are born with the temperament of one or the other. The Aristotelian educator tells you how to live expertly and by what efficient means, the faith-born shepherd encourages you. The Scribes, Sadducees, and Pharisees of Jesus' times were Aristotelian-born, having followed the high brow vogue of the captivity. With these he may not have concord but took into receivership the ministry of the

forerunner John who had preached repentance and the new birth. He cannot rely entirely on wisdom to seek the lost of the house of Israel nor to make a new creature of the lost. Among the erudite sons of Hellas in Asia Minor Paul made his converts by means of Isaiah's Suffering Servant and not by Gamaliel's polished aphorisms.

A greater than Solomon is here. The greater was not a perfectionist in the fine art of living. For him the word *perfect* meant "more than the man." The end of the commandment for the Jew of Solomon's time was tranquillity but for those trained in Jesus' doctrine it was "charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned" (I Tim. 1:5).

In an Epicurean era there is a temptation to present one's congregation with an ethical study. The pews listen with active attention because the theme carries the suggestion of wellbeing and they enjoy the compliment of being addressed in academic language. At the other extreme is the extemporaneous contribution, predestined to dullness because it is from, of, and to the heart alone. To strike the golden mean of our times the sermon may well have a studied paragraph or two partaking of the nature of the pedagogue's fine art of presentation. There is a trend toward an enlightened and educated laity through the Church. Several pastors known to the writer whose denominations have no pericopes, follow the topics of the Uniform Lessons of the Bible school to satisfy the demand for a curriculum that goes forward. Our times are not unlike Solomon's in prosperity and Epicurean leaning, and in an emphasis on the education of religion.

Our church has never refused its *imprimatur* on a polished introduction or studied presentation and yet has always remained faithful to the forensic methods of its Teacher. John's prologue is soon over and he is telling of the forerunner. Our church remembers the long experience with Aristotle and the scholiasts. After seven or eight centuries of a philosophical domination of religion the Bhagavad Gita emerged in the first century and went to another extreme. Worship of the Krishna promised his indwelling. A swing to an intellectual emphasis is a certain token of a swing to the far end before progress attains its stride.

None saw life in its utmost seriousness as the Dean of teachers and yet he is better known as one to whom the heart was the first point of contact. Forgetting the golden utterances of Gamaliel, Paul said that "with the heart man believes unto righteousness" (Rom. 10: 10). We concede to the theologians that in the development of faith there is a crystalization of knowledge on the part of the believer who grows and that it is vital in governing the whole being. With the mind, heart and will in the unity of the Spirit there yet remains that by which we best know faith, an ardent yearning.

Book Reviews and Notices[1]

The Interpreter's Bible, Volume II: Leviticus . . . Samuel. Edited by Nolan B. Harmon. New York and Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953. 1,176 pages. $8.75.

The present reviewer feels better about the work on Old Testament books in *The Interpreter's Bible* since his perusal of Volume II. Three of W. F. Albright's most distinguished pupils have contributed their sound scholarship and evangelical interest to important books which even the fine introductory articles of Volume I tended to skimp. G. Ernest Wright on Deuteronomy, John Bright on Joshua, and our own colleague at Gettysburg, Jacob M. Myers, on Judges redeem these books from the flaws which Genesis and Exodus suffered in the area of exegesis. The important studies of Gerhard von Rad, Martin Noth and G. F. Moore have been laid under contribution here in a manner which atones from the departures from sound criticism and solid exegesis which Volume I betrays. And what is more, an awareness of the theological significance of the great series of Deuteronomic histories, and especially of the evangelical basis of Deuteronomy itself, has been brought to the fore.

The more individualistic contributions of a group of British theologians, in Nathaniel Micklem's Leviticus, John Marsh's Numbers, and G. B. Caird's Samuel effect a good balance in this volume. Leviticus appeals to this reviewer as the best done in this group, but there is great strength in the work of each of them and an independence of judgment and verve of style which one has come to expect and welcome in present day British theologians and biblical scholars. These men are masters in their own right without having to make obvious which university they attended and what common master they venerate.

The most individual book in the series covered in Volume II is Ruth. It may be singled out for the excellent treatment accorded it exegetically by Miss Louise P. Smith and in the direction of its homiletical exposition by James T. Cleland. These writers' reserve, what they forbear to say, matches the sound judgment expressed in their comments. Here the combination heralded in the advertising of *The Interpreter's Bible* attained its goal: the exposition is really based upon and in harmony with the exegesis. Having read through Ruth with some twenty classes of Hebrew students, this reviewer claims the right to wax enthusiastic over its handling in the present work.

But why has no one ever translated and understood the obvious force of Ruth 1:17? The RSV ought here to italicize "even." Of course Ruth's death or Naomi's would separate them. The point is that *the death,* this succession of deaths that has taken their men folk, has no effect upon the loyalty of Ruth to Naomi, for it is a steadfast love which surmounts family relationships or their dissolution, because it is grounded in the covenant faith of Israel into which Ruth has found her way. Translate: "The Lord do so to me and more, if these deaths should cause separation of me from thee." Or paraphrase, "God curse me if the losses we have suffered should separate us." Here is a good instance of Hebrew concreteness of thought and expression which seems perennially to have escaped interpreters. It appeals to this reviewer as worth pointing out on this occasion because his own departure from the ranks of Old Testament professors makes him want to echo Ruth's sentiment and make it his own in relation to his love of the subject.

CHARLES M. COOPER

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1 Books reviewed or noticed in these pages may be purchased through your church's publication house.

The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers. Vol. I: Early Church Exposition, Subsequent Deflections, and Medieval Revival. By LeRoy E. Froom. Washington: Review and Herald, 1950. 1,006 pages. $5.00.

This is the first of a series of four volumes designed to establish the Adventist reading of history on the basis of Scripture and a continuing tradition in Christian thought. The present volume (the material for which has evidently been collated later than that of several volumes already published, though subsequent in the series) deals with the biblical evidence and its interpretation from apostolic times down to the dawn of the Reformation.

An enormous amount of primary and secondary source material has evidently been accumulated for this work. This Advent Source Collection, claimed to be the largest in its field ever brought together in one place, witnesses to the diligence and enthusiasm of the author (a teacher in the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary in Washington), to the extensive collaboration he has received from libraries and scholars here and abroad, and to the generous financial subsidies which Adventist publishing interests have been willing to grant.

Here is the fundamental and familiar Adventist thesis: Deeply hidden in the Scripture are the data which indicate God's plan for the successive ages of history. It is not to be expected that the immediate recipients of the message of Scripture should be able to understand the continuity, comprehensiveness and repetition in all these data; certain methods of interpretation are needed to make them plain. Dr. Froom proposes an exhaustive survey of these attempts.

Prophecy, of course, is to be understood primarily in the sense of prediction of things to come. While the author of this massive work pays lip-service to those aspects of prophecy which seem of primary importance to most Christians, his major interest is in what he calls "comprehensive outline prophecies," and therefore the books of Daniel and Revelation are his principal fields.

Having thus selected apocalyptic as his major "control," it is easy for Dr. Froom to evaluate pre-Christian Jewish thought, the attitude of our Lord and the writers of the New Testament, the Fathers of the church, and indeed all later exposition, on this basis. He finds that Augustine (influenced by the Donatist Tyconius) was the great deflector of Christian interest away from the "prophetic" to an allegorical interpretation of history. Subsequent protests against the growing power and worldliness of the church took as their basis this adventist-millennarian reading of history. So, on down through the age of the Reformation and into modern times, it has been possible to find in the recurring crises and the definitive events and personalities of history the fulfillment of "prophecy."

In the present volume the Roman Church, of course, assumes the characteristics of Antichrist, and the great medieval protests against its increasing corruption (those of Joachim of Flora, the Spiritual Franciscans, the Waldensians, and others) are extensively studied.

Immense labor and exhaustive research have gone into this great attempt to establish a thesis already determined. Even those who (like the present reviewer) find themselves unable to agree with the author, must admire, and profit by, the diligence which results in so much light shed on obscure movements and individuals who protested through the centuries in the interests of spiritual religion.

The extensive and admirably detailed bibliography which is a feature of this work evidently includes practically everything which bears on the author's field. Primary and secondary sources are included, and the book is enriched (?) with imaginative illustrations and detailed charts in the familiar Adventist style.

LLOYD MERL WALLICK

The Nature of the Church. Edited by R. Newton Flew. New York: Harpers, 1952. 337 pages plus index. $4.00.

This brings in book form a group of papers prepared for study and discussion at the third World Conference on Faith and Order, Lund, Sweden. Each essayist sought to answer such questions as, What is the church? How did it originate? Who are its members? What are its distinguishing

marks? What is its mission and message? How is it related to the Bible? How is it related to the state? In other words, a careful study of these essays should reveal the nature and extent of agreement and disagreement among various Christian communions on the very important theme under discussion here.

The volume falls into two parts. The first deals with the churches in Europe and the East. The second deals with the churches in America. As far as possible, each communion is represented by a statement written by one of its members, and approved by the church in question. Since no Roman Catholic could be found to write about that communion, the editor had to undertake this task himself, with what would appear to a non-Roman Catholic to be a fair degree of success. Lutherans will be interested to know that Dr. Edmund Schlink writes for the Lutheran churches of Germany; while Prof. K. E. Skydsgaard of Denmark writes for the Lutheran churches of Scandinavia. Prof. E. H. Wahlstrom writes for the Lutherans of America. For the rest, the individual essays show many prominent authors. Of special interest is the essay on the church of South India, which reflects the uncertainty arising within such an odd union of churches, humanly speaking.

The articles on the Lutheran churches show the tension so prevalent in Lutheran circles today between the ecumenical obligation and faithfulness to the historic confession and the local task. On the one hand, the Lutherans feel strongly that they must bear their witness and take part in the general movements of our time toward a new appreciation of the unity of the church universal. On the other hand, they feel strongly that this underlying unity can be recognized in practical union and communion only where there is real agreement in the teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments.

The volume is to be recommended to pastors, students, and laymen who wish to gain a fuller understanding of the thought of the great branches of Christendom concerning themselves.

ALBERT A. JAGNOW

Mandate to Humanity. By Edwin McNeill Poteat. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953. 238 pages. $3.75.

Dr. Edwin McNeill Poteat, former president of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School and now pastor of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, Raleigh, North Carolina, is a scholar in his own right. This fact is witnessed to in his many writings as well as in this recent book. In crisp, pungent language, Dr. Poteat in a few pages gives one of the finest résumés of the results of biblical criticism that we have yet read. We may not accept all of his conclusions, but we nevertheless marvel at his ability.

The basic contention of the author is that the Ten Commandments are a Mandate to Humanity. They have been foreshadowed in earlier codes and we can trace their further development even after Moses' codification. The difference between the other laws (Hittite, Babylonian, etc.) and the Ten Commandments as developed by the Hebrews is to be found within the covenant relationship with God. As the concept of the covenant relationship grew so did the understanding of the law until we find it best expressed by the prophets.

The division of the Commandments used by Dr. Poteat is different from anything which we have seen before. He uses two divisions, but he includes the fourth commandment (according to our Lutheran division) with the commandments dealing with our relationship to God directly. This first division is introduced by a very interesting study of "The Right to Command." Here again the unique approach of the author is stimulating.

The author directs our attention to the question of monotheism in the Hebrew religion in his chapter, "NO Other Gods." He makes a study of "Man's Other God" under the idea of the place the "self" has played in the religions of man, and he concludes by saying: "I have been arguing, in what I call a parenthesis, that the chief rival of God is and, for all we know, always has been the ego." In his chapter entitled "The Image Problem," he discusses the different meanings of this commandment as it applies to art, etc., but the heart of the chapter may

be found in these words, "Man was made in the image of God. Foolishly he thinks he can worship himself. This leads him ultimately to the ruin that awaits all self-aggrandizement."

The second division of the Commandments is capped with a chapter "Our Moral Bill of Rights," and then in order follow our Right to Life, Right to Integrity, Right to Property, Right to Justice and a chapter on Covetousness. Here, in modern application, the meaning of each of these rights is stated for us.

In his graphic way, Dr. Poteat draws the conclusion that in Jesus' summation of the law (Matt. 22:40) is the best statement of the whole matter, for here love is held out as the only proper answer. Dr. Poteat has taken a subject which has suffered mistreatment in other hands and has given it a certain freshness which is vital for our day. The book is so full of fresh insights and timely, modern applications that it is truly refreshing to read. When one has completed the book, he realizes that he has not only read the work of a delightfully clever author, but a scholarly and devout minister.

G. F. Schott

Religion and the Decline of Capitalism. By V. A. Demant. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952. 204 pages. $3.

The significance of these Holland Memorial lectures is twofold: First, in their concise acceptance of the responsibility to dicuss "the religion of the Incarnation in its bearing on the social and economic life of man." Second, in their explicit relation to the first Holland lectures, delivered by R. H. Tawney, the now classic *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism.* In his first lecture Demant reviews the great debate occasioned originally by the work of Max Weber, *Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus,* and brought to the attention of English readers by Tawney's work. The first lecture constitutes one of the best summaries of this debate and its literature for the general reader.

The real contribution of Demant's lectures, however, is that he brings the economic phase of the debate to an end and restores to its rightful place of importance the theological relevance of Tawney's work. For the real issue of the debate was the autonomy of the economic order. The uniqueness of Western capitalism lay in the predominance of market relationships over the greater part of the social field, and the treatment of labor, land, and money as commodities. Laissez-faire, the philosophical justification of these economic arrangements, claimed for the economic order a far-reaching freedom from non-economic criteria of social well-being. Capitalism in this view was morally self-sufficient.

Behind this presumed self-sufficiency Demant finds certain aims and axioms, i.e., a set of goals for action and a system of assumptions about the nature of the world and man. By means of these, capitalism could function in an apparently autonomous fashion. At this point, Demant illuminates many facets of the Weber-Troeltsch-Tawney discussion of the relationships between Protestantism and capitalism. He goes beyond them, however, in an analysis which determines the central theme of his lectures. For he contends that capitalism in its historic development destroyed the very axioms which framed the social order that gave it birth.

The social changes ushered in by capitalism, especially by the technological revolution which has been so closely intertwined with it, have dissolved the bonds of community. Man has been alienated from his neighbors, cut off from the moral consensus of the folk, set adrift in the anonymous mass of the industrial metropolis, deprived of self-respect and self-control, a creature of his anxieties and passions. But in such a world capitalism itself cannot function properly, for it needs the very framework of the community which it has destroyed.

Reacting against the unbearable anxieties of this condition, modern man turned to the state to restore the destroyed community. Thus the political faiths of the twentieth century arose with the claim that the economic order must subordinate itself to the larger community; no longer should the forms of our common life be left to the determination of the vicissitudes of the market.

Much of the preceding discussion is not

new. But within this familiar framework, Demant keeps pressing home two points. The first is that the aims and axioms of any social order always involve explicit or suppressed religious premises. The assumptions of the classical economists about the self-regulating nature of the market, their assertions about the freedom of economic behavior from non-economic sanctions, their self-assurance about the virtues and motivations of the entrepreneur—these imply an entire theological system, originally the natural theology of the Deists and later on a theology heavily weighted with Darwinism. The economic doctrines of capitalism, and of classical socialism as well, derive from the rational theology of the Enlightenment. They contain theological assertions about the ultimate nature of the world and of man, and make moral demands in terms of certain preconceptions about the object of man's ultimate loyalties.

This critique of capitalist theology (and by implication of much socialist thought as well) moves to another consideration. For to the concern for the public welfare must be added another twentieth century concern, one which is in fact taking priority in many circles, namely, the concern for the political freedom of the citizen. For the age that witnessed and supported the growth of capitalist civilization was the age of liberalism, of the expansion of the rights of man and the legal protection of individual freedom. In what degree, Demant asks, do liberalism and capitalism belong together? In what measure is the growing power of the political faiths and the political control of the economic order a threat to human freedom? What, finally, is the answer of the religion of the Incarnation to the dilemmas and conflicts of the decline of capitalism?

In raising these questions, Demant joins with the growing company of both democratic and religious socialists in the revisionism of the mid-twentieth century. He faces up to the central issues in the condition of man today. We cannot restore the social structures of the past; our technological progress drives us ever faster into the future. What form shall we and can we give to that society? Can Christianity help restore community without destroying freedom?

These are great issues, and Demant deals with them in a fashion that makes his book indispensable for those who wish to have a theological understanding of the direction of economic change. The book lacks both the intellectual brilliance and the convincing documentation of the Tawney lectures; upon occasion, it is strikingly unaware of some of the differences between American and European capitalism. These are minor flaws, however, in an excellent piece of work.

KARL H. HERTZ

A Philosophical Scrutiny of Religion. By C. J. Ducasse. New York: The Ronald Press, 1953. 441 pages, $4.50.

In this work, the distinguished Senior Professor of Philosophy of Brown University has made available the latest textbook in English for students of philosophy of religion. It is, of course, considerably more than that, for even to be a good textbook for such courses it must be sufficiently interesting and informative to satisfy the inquiring mind of any general reader. Let it be said at once, then, that by both these standards—i.e., as a text and as a thoughtful trade book for the general reader—it is a fine piece of work.

The author is himself a guarantee of this. As a Paul Carus Lecturer (see his book, *Nature, Mind, and Death,* 1951), as a past President of the American Philosophical Association, and as a member of three editorial boards of scholarly journals, Professor Ducasse could confidently have been expected to bring insight, objectivity, and clarity to his mature discussion of the issues of religion. This he emphatically does. His eighteen chapters have apparently been hammered out of repeated discussions and seminars at Brown University. One could scarcely imagine that students were less than challenged by the way in which the major issues are here discussed. Religion is approached as an enduring and highly important aspect of culture, and Professor Ducasse's concern is that "responsible men and women pierce the fog of emotional superstition and of equally

emotional cynicism which commonly obscures the subject" (p. v).

If I were to try to name the outstanding characteristic of this book, I should say that it is precisely the polarity which is expressed in the above question. This is a polarity which is exhibited both in Ducasse's approach to religious problems and in the positions which he takes. Exhibiting an ability to coin phrases, he speaks of "theological imperialism" and of the equally "imperialistic scientism," which are foreign to the essence alike of religion or of sicence. He declares himself unimpressed by "sceptical dogmatism in the name of science" and by "fideistic dogmatism in the name of religion" (p. v). This, I submit, is not only pungent writing, it is also the spirit proper to the objective critic. Any clergyman or theologian could very well take these phrases and, exfoliating them in a lecture, find himself wrestling with one of the central issues in religious thought and life today.

It should be clear by now that Professor Ducasse is frankly out neither to sell religion to the irreligious, nor to cause the religious to unload their religion. He is out to clarify —hence the appropriate adjective in the title, "Scrutiny." In dealing with such concepts as the supernatural, sin, divinity, belief, faith, evil, free will, immortality, and the like, his effort is above all to clarify and examine.

Rarely does one do this, of course, without also engaging in evaluation. This is an author's privilege, even responsibility, providing he gives good reasons. But it is when he expresses some of these evaluative judgments that one must voice surprise at the unusual objects of scepticism and belief. Not that one is surprised, for example, to hear him express great doubt—yes, clearly reject—the traditional arguments for the belief in god(s). For, as a distinguished Jesuit recently wrote, "these cut no ice any longer and might as well be forgotten." When, however, he comes to the evaluation of telepathy and spiritism, the author is, to me, amazingly ready to accept what he calls "the abundant well established facts" (p. 401). Here, I fear he has been caught with his critical faculties down, and he looked and operated as a philosopher of religion so much better with them up. Equally disturbing are his repeated suggestions that polytheism seems to be as plausible, if not a more defensible theistic form of belief than is monotheism. Anyone who believes so may be expected to marshal compelling arguments for his belief, or else not utter them in this flat form. I should think the author would have great difficulty in arguing the point.

If space permitted, we should be much more inclined to discuss the author's enlightening treatment of the problem of defining religion, or to discuss his rather questionable treatment of the problem of religious persecution (should he not point out that although Protestantism confesses its sin in having engaged at times in persecution, as in the case of Servetus, Roman Catholicism can and does not voice regret for its persecution?). Though the book will scarcely find enthusiastic use in conservative circles, it should be welcomed as an honest and useful effort at clarification and as one of the better texts in the field. A mature scholar has done a mature job.

CHARLES W. KEGLEY

What is Religion? By Alban G. Widgery. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953. 330 pages. $5.

The author of this volume, Professor Widgery of Duke University, is a frequent contributor to philosophical literature here and abroad. He has taught and written widely and this volume reflects his erudition and urbanity, and the limitations of each, quite clearly. Being the substance of lectures delivered recently, as the author tells us in the preface, at Oxford and Cambridge, the volume has an air of learned urgency that derives, first, from the intellective and religious malaise against which the book is a diatribe and, second, from the position which the author so vigorously champions.

There are two foes envisioned which seemingly made this book incumbent. One enemy is the philosopher of the day—most notably the "Naturalist"—who has confused reflection upon root matters of religion and philosophy by his "indefiniteness," i.e., his unwillingness to speak and think categorically

upon very important human problems. Such piece-meal philosophy as Naturalists practice is ambiguous and the philosophers are non-courageous. The other enemy is not given so much attention but the omission is perhaps the consequence of the tact of one who does not want to become exclusive in his discussion about exclusiveness. Nonetheless, the number is legion for the foe includes all who believe their own faith is true and salvatory and the other man's not, and, is illustrated particularly by the "Neo-orthodox," whom Mr. Widgery finds guilty of "Isolationism." The situation in the world of letters is such that these strikingly, among others, have circumvented the history of religion and the manifoldness of the religious experience of living men and women and answered the question, "what is religion?" too easily, if not falsely. This volume proposes, therefore, another mode of responding and the burden of the volume is the endeavor to ask this question again and then to answer it in the mode prescribed.

A large amount of learning has gone into this work. And, one is loathe in his ignorance to judge another's learning. But, there is more than learning—there is an argument —and the merit of an argument is not always a function of the learning of the arguer nor is its recognition a function, necessarily, of the quantity of learning of its reader. This argument has, as the author avers after Hume, the difficulty of defending something affirmative against those who only state and defend a negative case. The contemporary philosopher (and Mr. Widgery persists in calling them Naturalists, when actually they are of an analytical or logical-empirical proclivity) seems to be saying that there is only one kind of experience or intuition and it is sensory. Judging art and religion and morality by this standard, the Naturalists find all of these activities to be wanting. Philosophers have become so engrossed with one kind of experience and one kind of intuition that they have resolved other issues which the author finds to be metaphysical by innuendo or default or fashion. A proposal is in order, viz., the "recognition" (and that is the crux of the matter) of different kinds of intuition, of experience, and the admission to the canons of the intellective judgment of "ultimate terms" and "ultimate propositions," none of which could in principle be reduced to each other.

Philosophy in the grand manner does include, the author avers, epistemology (and logic) and metaphysics, under the categories of which are subsumed two very general subject matters: "A genuine theory of knowledge is not merely of logical forms and categories of thought: it is primarily a recognition of different kinds of acquaintance" (p. 25); and, metaphysics is the search for unity among departmental philosophies and the probable truths of all kinds of knowledge. Mr. Widgery has no enthusiasm for intellectual anarchy and strongly believes that there can be only a single epistemological apparatus *for* all kinds of knowing, and, supplementing this, a "Whole," a unity, of results and principles *from* all of knowledge. Departmental philosophies are multiple. There is conceivably a branch of philosophy for every kind of intuition or experience or acquaintance. The order of acquisition of learning is the following: first, the experience (cognitive, esthetic, moral, historical, religious); then knowledge and irreducible propositions about nature, art, morals, history and religion; then a departmental philosophy ("critical, constructive, and axiological") based, the author says, "to some extent on the sciences of its own field"; then epistemology and metaphysics, the unified grasp in differing modes of all of the rest. Mr. Widgery is stung by the critiques of deductive metaphysics and he is provoked to stern wrath by anticipated criticisms which might say that this is nothing but a restoration of Hegel!

Because of the neglect of some specific kinds of experience and philosophical reflection upon them, Professor Widgery feels the obligation to write this book as a departmental philosophy of religion. He promises in a footnote (p. 58) to fill an even greater gap with a two-volume work on the philosophy of history. But this book begins with a plea for the subject matter as such, insisting that it is necessary to consider, apparently, just about everything.

Everything seems to the author to be related to everything. But the important issue in all of this, and certainly a most noteworthy one, is the emphasis "upon the data of actual religious experience as the starting point." And here the author expends his energies to showing that religious experience is irreducible and any theory that argues reducibility does inadequately by the facts.

The third chapter is a crucial one for the author here asks whether knowledge (or, as he rather unhappily says an "idea") is essential to religion. The answer of course must be, no. There is an idea of God but there is also acquaintance with God. Religion is the Acquainting and the Experiencing and is differentiated by quality. Knowledge about this experience is probable, tentative, and not constitutive nor destructive of the experience itself. Likewise, one must admit that the nature of God is not certainly known from religious experience. Even God's existence cannot be argued for; but the author believes that those who have religious experiences (some Buddhists and others notwithstanding) have the certitude and have it immediately. As I understand the rest of the volume, it seems that its chapters are intended to give factual amplitude to the above view. Thus, in the chapter about man, the reader surveys a large array of views and assertions that deny the above and then an even larger number that add to its credentials. In the section on "Suffering and Sin: Redemption and Salvation" and ". . . Religious Practices," we get explicit denials of some views, e.g., the doctrine that salvation is exclusive or that the sole purpose of religion is redemption. These and other views do, in the author's estimate, constitute a denial of the crucial view he wishes to defend.

This book is a large one and is full of interesting asides from all of the world's religions. It is perhaps intended to be only the prolegomena to future philosophies of religion. It is certainly instructive and for this reader-teacher it will probably be very useful in pedagogical tasks. However, the major arguments do not seem to be sustained by the evidence adduced for them. E.g., what is the nature of the judgments about philosophy—are these empirical? If so, what is the evidence? If there is evidence, why are there so many Naturalists? And, if religion is actually to be understood by its historical manifestations, why do so many religious people think this is wrong? Certainly the great saints of Christendom are not empiricists in this sense and if they had been they would have contented themselves with the religious mediocrity that historical survey always gives us. There seems to be something missing in all of this book that needs to be made explicit. Perhaps all the Naturalists need to be psychoanalyzed—maybe they are all sinners and cannot will the truth. In any case, if there is evidence and they disregard it, they must be perverse—and Mr. Widgery has not really accounted for them and the difficulties of philosophical disagreement. If there is no evidence, as I suspect, then Mr. Widgery seems to me to be wrong about the intellectual situation. The same sort of thing can be said about religious experience and the author's views about it. I am not sure he has actually isolated it despite his many pages nor am I clear that he has given sufficiently radical thought to the fact that everything he adduces as evidence can be construed by another hypothesis, even contrary to his own. And this is why, I believe, such studies have so largely been given up by the philosophical community. If there were demonstrably even the possibility that one hypothesis could in principle be "better" than another, then Mr. Widgery's book might seem appropriate. It is this fact that keeps the volume somewhat tangential of its mark despite its learning, its seriousness, and its obvious didactic character.

PAUL L. HOLMER

Unity and Language: A Study in the Philosophy of Johann Georg Hamann. By James C. O'Flaherty. Chapel Hill, N. C., University of North Carolina Studies in the Germanic Languages and Literatures, No. 6, 1952. 100 pages. $3.

This short book by Professor O'Flaherty of Wake Forest College and an even shorter one by Walter Lowrie, *Hamann, An Existentialist* (Princeton Theological Seminary,

1950) are the principal works in the English language about Hamann, one of the most discriminating Protestant and Lutheran thinkers of the eighteenth century. These two books fortunately supplement one another quite well, Walter Lowrie's being primarily biographical and Professor O'Flaherty's being a systematic study of one of Hamann's most controversial, albeit meaning-laden, theses. There are numerous works in the German language about Hamann and these show with amplitude that he was an exciting thinker and worthy of exacting scrutiny. If for nothing else he ought to be read by every student of the German enlightenment for in one way or another he was related to Goethe, Herder, Jacobi, Kant, Lessing, Mendelssohn, and numerous others.

This volume is concerned with Hamann's thesis about language. Hamann had agreed with the radical critics of philosophy, Protestant and otherwise, who said that philosophy does not have "Being" as its subject matter. Hamann was one with the nominalists who believed that all reflection which resolved intellectual difficulties by multiplying entities was gratuitous. All reflection which issued in precision and exactness and all languages and language systems which were "purer" were so in virtue of diminution of meanings. Most philosophies were a substitution of word for thing, concepts for things, and systems for concepts. And the immediate and unreflective language of everyday usage which Hamann termed natural and poetic was more significant and richer in meanings. The natural language, rather than the manufactured and artificial and contrived languages of science and philosophy, was the unifying point, the *principium coincidentiae oppositorum*. And as Hamann understood the Bible's message and its peculiarity over against the philosophies of the day, he believed it to lie in the fact that God revealed himself in words—and natural words besides. Hamann believed it religiously necessary and intellectually true to say as loudly as possible that there were no eternal truths, no absolute certainties, no invariant moral commands. Neither a system of theological verities nor an ordering of necessary *apriori* and rational categories made sense to Hamann. Both were wrong even though they seemed to exclude each other. The "Berlin idealization of Christianity and Lutheranism" had to be refuted as did the rationalisms of the day. These were artificial linguistic creations and were poorer in truth value, rather than richer as their adherents said. Natural language was normative, objective and poetic.

It must be remembered that Hamann was a translator of Hume and that he believed himself to be in very close relation to the spirit of the Bible and Luther. He was at once a nominalist, a kind of sceptic, an antimetaphysician, an empiricist, and a Lutheran Christian. The unity he found for his own personality was mediated by words, quite ordinary natural words about Jesus Christ, and thereafter Hamann distrusted every endeavor, religious or otherwise, to translate these words into new coin. So profound was his language orientation that he constructed a theory of the nature of language which defines itself as one reads Mr. O'Flaherty's book as perhaps the thread in all of the chaos that Hamann's own writings otherwise appear to be.

This volume is a difficult book to master but it is rewarding. It aims to take the reader into the very crucial and thoroughly iluminating language thesis which probably is most critical for the understanding of all else Hamann has written. Mr. O'Flaherty has done a very able piece of writing and it is to be hoped that others might pursue further some of Hamann's theological and philosophical thought, using this little book as the prolegomena to such study.

PAUL L. HOLMER

As I Remember. By Edgar J. Goodspeed. New York: Harper Brothers, 1953. 315 pages. $3.50.

With characteristic facility of style Dr. Goodspeed presents in this autobiography a most interesting summary of his main activities during fourscore years and two. Born into academic surroundings and plunging early into scholarly pursuits, he crowded a marvelous volume of achievement into his life. He became one of the outstanding bib-

lical scholars of the twentieth century. Fifty-five years have been given to unremitting New Testament research. Though unable to read after nightfall he has produced 57 books of his own and hundreds of significant magazine articles.

Dr. Goodspeed's life is deeply interwoven with the launching of the University of Chicago and its subsequent growth. But his delightful reminiscences also take the reader across the Atlantic on the never-ending search for papyri and manuscripts that might aid in the progress of New Testament studies. His romantic discovery of the Rockefeller McCormick New Testament helped to make his young University a center for Greek manuscript study. Of special interest is the story of his translation of the New Testament in what is called *An American Translation.* The furore that attended its appearance in 1932 and its subsequent success constitute a fascinating narrative, as Dr. Goodspeed tells it.

In the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament (1946) also Dr. Goodspeed had an important share, and he says he regards a group translation as "the best plan of all." He writes at the end of his autobiography: "To one who has shared vigorously in the fight for periodic retranslation of the Bible, and sometimes against great odds as it seemed, it is cheering to see that battle now nobly won."

Those who have enjoyed the delightful hospitality of Dr. and Mrs. Goodspeed and shared their charming fellowship will not be surprised to see that this autobiography is affectionately dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Goodspeed. Dr. Goodspeed calls her "the heroine of the story," and such she really is.

ABDEL ROSS WENTZ

Dictionary of Mysticism. Edited by Frank Gaynor. New York: Philosophical Library, 1953. 210 pages. $5.

The latest of some thirty dictionaries published by the Philosophical Library on a variety of subjects (labor, education, atomic energy, psychoanalysis, etc.), this one offers brief definitions of some 2,000 terms in the broad area which includes magic, occultism, theosophy, demonology, spiritualism, and astrology as well as what may usually be called mysticism. Some terms (e.g., Oahspe) are here treated for the first time. Nowhere else are so many brought together within the covers of a small reference book. Here and there definitions are inadequate. For example, the term Rosicrucian Order refers to A.M.O.R.C. without suggesting the existence of other Rosicrucian organizations. Christian Science is included, but there are no entries for I Am, Psychiana, etc. The price is outrageously high.

Stories from Our Church. A Popular History of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. By Enok Mortensen. Des Moines, Iowa: D.E.L.C.A., 1952. 180 pages. $2.00.

As the subtitle indicates, this is a popular account of Danish Lutheranism in America, more particularly of what is today called the American Evangelical Lutheran Church. Although the author does not include technical references and has not appended a bibliography, he shows that he is acquainted with the major primary and secondary sources. The account is helpful and illuminating, and the appendix, which contains biographical information about all clergymen who have been connected with the body, should prove to be useful.

Unfortunately a recent fire in Blair, Nebraska, destroyed most of the stock of books, and only a few copies are still available at Grand View College, in Des Moines.

Saint Bonaventura, The Mind's Road to God. Translated by George Boas. New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1953. 46 pages. Paper, 50 cents.

Considerable attention has been given in the last few decades to the theology and philosophy of Bonaventure. An excellent introduction to the teaching and method of the thirteenth century Franciscan is offered in this translation of a small and complete work, the *Itinerarium Mentis ad Deum.* The translation is very readable and is preceded by a helpful discussion of Bonaventure's teaching.

The Word of Life. By Edmund Beaver. Blair, Nebr.: Lutheran Publishing House, 1953. 67 pages.

I Was Sick. Translated by Fred C. M. Hansen. Blair, Neb.: Lutheran Publishing House, 1953. 130 pages.

The smallness in size of these slight volumes for the sick may be the inverse of the potential largeness of their content. They have appeared almost simultaneously from the press of one of our own publishing houses. They can be used together with profit as complementary reading for the sick and afflicted. Rev. Beaver has compiled a well chosen selection of Bible verses suitable for reading by the sick and the aged. His central theme is the Jesus who has the answer to all of man's needs. The book's large print, the attractively colored and well known pictures of Christ, and some original art sketches make this book a suitable gift to those who are on the sick bed.

The second volume is a translation of greetings to the sick from Christian doctors in the Scandinavian countries. Arranged to be read chapter by chapter, it is designed to help all who are sick to see eternal life, its giver and preserver. These meditations reflect the spirit and the insight of Christian medical men who see beyond the biological. As a direct help in his ministry among the sick the American pastor will find a new undergirding from these scientifically trained men who have retained a clear and definite Christian point of view. Men of the medical profession in America will also find it a work worthy of emulation. In fact, the new stress on pastoral care almost demands that our own Christian doctors put themselves to the task of speaking in this way to the sick.

PAUL M. LINDBERG

Sex in Childhood and Youth. By Alfred Schmieding. St. Louis: Concordia, 1953. 158 pages. $1.85.

Dr. Schmieding is academic dean and chairman of the department of education and psychology at Concordia Teachers' College, River Forest, Illinois. He holds earned degrees from the University of Chicago in the field of psychology and philosophy. With some years of experience in teaching prospective teachers, he has had a sound base from which to write on the complex and disturbing problems of sex education.

The reason for attempting another book in a field where there are so many books available Dr. Schmieding gives in a sentence: "One can examine fifty books and articles on sex education and come away with the feeling that the religious and doctrinal aspects of the problem have been given little attention" (p. 1). He gives a tribute to Roman Catholic writers in this field for their doctrinal approach. Protestant writers generally confine their discussion of the subject to the areas of psychology, sociology and physiology. This book well justifies the author's purpose to apply Christian truth to the problem of sex without discounting the results of scientific investigation.

Dr. Schmieding recognizes the need for team work in sex education, with home, church, and school equally responsible. He devotes chapters to three age groups: preschool, elementary school, and adolescent. Parents in the home have special responsibility for children up to six years of age. Timing of sex education is important. It should come normally out of concrete situations and parents need to wipe out of memory their own unhappy experiences in this field during their childhood. They may await questions from their children, or create the situations that raise questions. They must show no self-consciousness.

Elementary school children need to know how to think, but where God's revealed will is concerned, they need to know what to think. The author makes the following propositions: 1) The demand for chastity is not confined to adults in the Bible; 2) children of this age do not have strong sex urges yet; 3) children hear much that is distorted and objectionable from others. He notes that sex perverts often prey upon this age group. Just before adolescence, as well as during adolescence, sex education is specially necessary.

For parent, teacher and pastor, *emphasis is laid* on gaining and holding confidence. Adolescents do not want to be teased where sex is concerned. It is a time of emotional and physical change and requires patience

and understanding. Assurance must be given that growth is normal. Girls are often attracted to older boys and without knowledge are in great danger. There must be a balance between chastity with its restraints and cold aloofness. The same books on sex should be read by both boys and girls. They should know about each other. Positive motivation, rather than the threat of disease and other unpleasant outcomes, should lead to chastity. The sex urge should be taught as God-given and normal.

Effective motivation must stem from Christian love. Civic law, the beauty of chastity, and the strengthening of character through restraint are all good but limited in influence. Christian young folks should be led to desire "to regulate their lives according to the law of God." The love of Christ must constrain.

A very interesting chart is included showing the allocation and emphasis of major factors in sex education. It would be an aid for parents, teachers and pastors in deciding at what age and by whom the various factors in wholesome sex education should be taught. The entire book is well illustrated with all types of problems growing out of the experience of the author. The final chapter is devoted to listing and evaluating reference and source materials.

This is a timely book when so much publicity has been given the sex problem through the Kinsey reports. It is a good antidote for the flood of cheap, sensational books in the field. Dr. Schmieding has done a real service to home, church and school, by showing that sex can and should be taught with Christian motivation.

AMOS JOHN TRAVER

Die Anrede Gottes. Das biblische Wort dem modernen Menschen dargeboten. By Hans-Werner Bartsch. Hamburg: Herbert Reich, 1953. 90 pages. DM 3.85.

It may be said that it is the function of theology to define and explicate the message of the church for a given time and situation. Advocates of what is called "demythologization" have taken this task seriously, and the best evidence of this is the attempt by Bartsch to apply in his preaching the fruits of the Bultmann school of New Testament interpretation. He here offers a dozen sermons delivered in the spring of 1953, and even the sharpest critics of demythologization must concede that these are fine specimens of evangelical preaching addressed to the man of today. Although the Bultmann school can of course not be judged by a thin sheaf of sermons, this book offers an instructive and stimulating introduction to the relation which a contemporary New Testament interpretation may have to the task of preaching.

THEODORE G. TAPPERT

The Church and Social Responsibility. Edited by J. Richard Spann. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953. 272 pages. $2.75.

Here is a book of more than ordinary significance. The editor has secured the cooperation of fifteen contributors to a symposium on the subject of the book. Each contributor has demonstrated his specialized knowledge in the field with which he deals. There are divergent points of view among the authors and yet there is a remarkable unanimity of emphasis. The material is divided into four parts, dealing with the social ministry of the church, basic human rights and the community, the church and the economic order, and the church and the political order. The various chapters examine in detail the nature of our society and suggest areas in which social action is needed. Among the subjects considered are, the Christian bases of rights, freedoms, and responsibilities; the New Testament sources of the social ministry of the church; the person in the community, the family, race relations, Christian vocation, economics, citizenship, crime, war and politics. It is difficult to anticipate how extensively these subjects are dealt with in one brief volume. One of the authors discusses the meaning of evangelism and emphasizes what true evangelism ought to be. Churchmen are commencing to realize that the church must seriously face the social problem if it is going to have a vital message and significant role in modern life, and here is a volume which is a real contribution to this contemporary problem. It is a

long time since I read a volume which I enjoyed more.

A. D. Mattson

Patterns of Protestant Church Music. By Robert M. Stevenson. Duke University Press, 1953. 186 pages.

With the purpose given in the preface of tracing the different music traditions that have grown up in the various major denominations, this work succeeds at least in part. Various chapters deal with the musical contributions and viewpoints of Luther, Merbecke, Bach, Handel, Watts, the Wesleys, John Mason Neale and Ira D. Sankey, with appendices on Twentieth Century Papal Pronouncements and the Jewish Union Hymnal.

But this book does more. It has brought to light a number of "little known facts about well-known people" that are most interesting to one working with church music.

How many of us know of the narrow escape from a martyr's death by John Merbecke, who contributed so richly to the chant of the Church of England and in a smaller way even to the Luthern Common Service?

Interesting also is the chapter entitled "Bach's Appeals to Caesar" wherein Bach is shown to have had some of the administrative problems which beset us present-day church musicians. Thus, by bringing the matter a bit closer to us, he is the more able to inspire us.

In this day of musical impoverishment in some churches and musical snobbery in others, it is refreshing to note the author's philosophical inquiry as to what constitutes really great music. This he does in the chapter on Ira D. Sankey, the gospel hymn-writer.

These viewpoints, plus informative accounts on the Wesleys, Watts, and Neale, and the desired musical standards of the Roman Catholic and Jewish faiths, make this a well-documented book that should be read by all who work in the field of music in the church.

Robert S. Clippinger

Crossing the Kidron. Edited by William H. Eifert. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953. Paper, 108 pages.

A dozen sermons, based on episodes in the passion history and written by clergymen of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, are here offered "for personal inspiration and sermonic purposes." They are sober and earnest, but most of them (at least on the printed page) are not especially interesting.

Kindergebete. Mit Zeichnungen von Barbara Krokisius. Hamburg: Herbert Reich, 1953. 62 pages. DM 4.

Obviously produced as a gift item, this little book of traditional children's prayers is done in two-color calligraphy by Barbara Krokisius, a promising artist who died in 1949 at the age of twenty-seven. About two dozen simple sketches admirably illustrate the prayers for children who read or are read to. A short account of the artist by Walter Schnoor is appended.

The Parson's Joke Book. By E. V. Goad. Boston: Meador Publishing Co., 1953. 160 pages. $1.50.

The Baptist minister (incidentally a relative of the publisher), who compiled this book has made much use of humorous stories in his preaching because he believed that "the humorous incident, properly used, fills a large place in sermon delivery and effectiveness." His collection of anecdotes, drawn from life and reading, is not classified, and the index ("And that's important," "All figured out," etc.) will not be helpful in locating stories by topics. This may be a blessing in disguise. As far as the stories themselves are concerned, they are very brief (averaging not more than seventy-five words apiece), clean, readable, and sometimes funny.

Books Received

Clifford Ansgar Nelson, *The Cross is the Key.* Augustana, 1954.
Vergilius Ferm, ed., *The Protestant Credo.* Philosophical Library, 1953.
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Hjalmar Holmquist, *Handbok i Svensk Kyrko-Historia, Del III.* Svenska Kyrkans Diakonstyrelses Bokforlag, 1953.
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John Marsh, *The Fulness of Time.* Harper, 1952.
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Paul E. Johnson, *Psychology of Pastoral Care.* Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953.
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Growing in Christ. Concordia, 1953.
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Pierson Parker, *The Gospel before Mark.* University of Chicago Press, 1953.
Ruben Josefson, *Bibelns Auktoritet.* SKDB, 1953.
Jack Finegan, *Clear of the Brooding Cloud.* Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953.
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Winthrop S. Hudson, *The Great Tradition of the American Churches.* Harper, 1953.
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L. Harold DeWolf, *A Theology of the Living Church.* Harper, 1953.
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H. W. Ellis, *Christian Stewardship and Church Finance.* Zondervan, 1953.
Harris F. Rall, *Religion as Salvation.* Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953.
J. M. Spier (D. H. Freeman, tr.), *Christianity and Existentialism.* Presbyterian and Reformed Publ. Co., 1953.